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ABSTRACT

This report was written as part of the sponsor evaluation of the Educational Development Center (EDC) Open Education Follow Through Program under a grant from the U.S. Office of Education. In this study four groups of adults (teachers, aides, administrators, and parents) who are involved with the growth and development of children in the EDC Follow Through program in Burlington, Vermont were interviewed. This report is divided into 11 chapters concerning the following: (a) an overview of evaluation research procedures, (b) background information, (c) an overview of classroom activities, (d) how the teachers view their role in the school, (e) an overview of administrator activities, (f) the issue of parent involvement, (g) views on children's learning, (h) opinions of teachers concerning the EDC approach to learning, (i) responses to questions concerning EDC advisors, (j) satisfactions and difficulties of working in Follow Through, and (k) opinions concerning what will happen when Follow Through leaves Burlington. Each chapter includes an introduction, a summary of responses, an analysis of responses, and a detail of responses for each group interviewed. An appendix is attached which includes the interview questionnaires. (RC)

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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT

OF THE

EDC FOLLOW THROUGH ADVISORY APPROACH

A study based on interviews with teachers,
aides, administrators and parents in
the EDC Follow Through Program
in
Burlington, Vermont

1973-74

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PREFACE

This report was written as part of the sponsor evaluation of the EDC Open Education Follow Through Program under a grant from the U. S. Office of Education. It was based on the recognition of a need to share information about how the adults who work with children in this program view their work. We hope it will be helpful to the people in the Burlington Follow Through community to share each other's perceptions about their work. We also hope that the information presented in this report will be helpful to others who are working towards improving the opportunities for the growth and development of children.

In this study, we interviewed four groups of adults - teachers, aides, administrators and parents - who are involved with the growth and development of children in the EDC Follow Through program in Burlington, Vermont. They responded to questions about their views on children's learning, their roles in the school, their work with EDC advisors, and the difficulties and satisfactions they have experienced while working in the Follow Through program.

This study was conducted at a particular time in the program's development, in a particular community. It does not provide a basis for drawing conclusions about matters beyond the particular community studied and some clearly similar situations. It does provide detailed information about the beliefs and attitudes of the adults interviewed as they worked with children, with each other, and with EDC advisors, in the Follow Through program.

This report came into being as a result of the commitment, involvement and participation of many people.

We would like to thank the members of the Burlington Follow Through community - teachers, aides, administrators and parents - for sharing their responses with us and for making us welcome in their community. We appreciate the assistance of the project director, and Follow Through staff in scheduling interviews and facilitating communication during our visits to Burlington. We also wish to thank the parent-interviewers who took responsibility for collecting the parent data.

We would like to thank Ted Chittenden of the Early Education Group at Educational Testing Service for permission to use the interview format and selected questions from A Study of Teachers in Open Settings as a basis for constructing our interview schedules.

The EDC advisory staff, directed by Grace Hilliard, offered their thoughtful reactions and support throughout the course of this study. We are particularly grateful to David Alexander, EDC liaison advisor to Burlington in 1973-74, for his enthusiastic interest and participation in our research. We appreciate the untiring efforts of our able support staff - Dorothy Glacken, Alice Keeping, Barbara McKinley and Winifred Regan, in typing many drafts as well as the final report. We thank Jeanne McDonald for her help in coordinating the preparation of the report.

In closing, we also wish to thank Judith Lemon for her sensitive and competent editing of draft sections of the report and Mary Jane Neuendorffer for her careful proofreading of the final report. Dale Allen and Carol Ann Weissman, members of our current research staff, provided invaluable editorial assistance and support in the final stages of this project.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION RESEARCH PROCEDURES IN BURLINGTON

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The distinctive feature of the EDC Follow Through approach is its advisor system. The advisory is working to assist teachers, aides, administrators and parents to broaden their perception of the teaching/learning process. We believe that as these adults increase and enrich their range of responses, they will become better able to respond effectively to the needs and resources of children.

At times, EDC advisors focus on working with teachers and aides in order to effect educational change in the classroom; at other times advisors emphasize the importance of school and community support for the EDC Follow Through approach. These classroom/community focuses are complimentary.

Selected teachers, aides, administrators and parents at the EDC Follow Through site in Burlington, Vermont were interviewed to determine their attitudes and opinions about the EDC advisor system; the teaching/learning process; and the role of school and community in implementing the Follow Through program. The function of this report is to present the findings of those interviews. We have identified issues that seemed central to the functioning of the program. We have also reported the detail and variety of responses to each question, so that readers of this report will have the background information with which to make their own inferences.

1.2 SITE SELECTION

Following the time sequence established in the 1973-74 research proposal, we selected two of the ten EDC Follow Through communities as research sites. Two sites were chosen to make possible in depth research within the constraints of a limited research budget and staff. For 1973-74, the criteria for site selection were:

- -- The sites should include one metropolitan and one non-metropolitan community.
- -- The sites should approximate the average size of EDC-Follow Through communities, i.e., having about sixteen Follow Through classrooms.
- -- The sites should be public schools.
- -- People in the sites should not see the research as threatening their program.
- -- The liaison advisors should be willing to cooperate with the researchers.

Based on these criteria, we suggested the EDC Follow Through sites in Burlington, Vermont and Paterson, New Jersey for our 1973-74 evaluation research. We then conferred individually with all EDC advisors to learn:

- -- Which EDC-Follow Through communities each advisor was familiar with;
- -- Which communities each advisor expected to be working in during the following year;
- -- Whether each advisor agreed with the criteria set out by the researchers;
- -- Whether each advisor felt that Burlington and Paterson were appropriate sites for the proposed research.

Most EDC advisors found Burlington and Paterson acceptable

choices as 1973-74 research sites. In the meantime, the liaison advisor for Burlington assured us of his willingness to cooperate with the research effort and we were then ready to talk with Follow Through administrators in Burlington.

Based on these criteria, Burlington, Vermont and Paterson, New Jersey were selected as the sites for our research.

The liaison advisor who traveled to Burlington in August, 1973, initiated discussion of the proposed research with the project directors and principals in those communities. Since their reactions were favorable, we followed up with telephone calls to confirm their interest and to arrange for introductory visits by researchers in September. On the basis of thse telephone conversations, we proceeded with planning and sent the following letter to the project director, principals, local advisors, Policy Advisory Committee chairpersons and "Follow Through Community."

> We are writing to give you a general overview of our Research Plan for the 1973-74 school year. We will be working to document and develop a fuller understanding of the role of the EDC liaison advisor and the ways in which advisors affect Follow Through in communities. We would like to work with you on a study of how the EDC Advisory functions in Burlington.
>
> Our purpose in looking at the impact of EDC advisors is to find out: how the advisory role is seen; what it has included in the past; how it is functioning in the present; what are its strengths and its weaknesses. We hope that such information will contribute to a growing understanding of what advisors have and have not been able to accomplish in the context of a particular community and of what needs the community has which are not being or perhaps cannot be met by the advisory system. The function of this research will be to provide the

people engaged in the task of implementing Follow Through with information on the basis of which they can consider modifying their goals and/or their procedures.

To gather this information we plan to interview the liaison advisor and other advisors who travel to the community, relevant administrators, some teachers and aides and some parents. This will give us several different perspectives on the advisors' functions.

We hope that the research effort will prove to be a constructive model in developing ways of working together.

An important part of our project will be to share our findings with the people who talk to us. We plan to make the kinds of things we write about available to the people we interviewed before we share them with others. We will then be able to incorporate into our written reports both the original data with our interpretations and the reactions by the people interviewed to that data. All individual responses will be confidential. No person will be identified by name. Reference to role (administrator, teacher, aide, parent, advisor) will be the method of categorizing and reporting responses.

The form in which we will report our findings will be case studies. Case studies do not provide a basis for drawing conclusions about matters beyond the particular cases and clearly similar cases. Our research will not allow us to make definitive statements about other sites or about EDC advisors in general. Rather, the cases suggest questions and ideas about the interaction of elements within the case that may be relevant to other cases as well.

We would like to conduct our research in Burlington with representatives of the Burlington Follow Through community. We hope that you will be willing to work with us on this project.

We have spoken with your project director who has offered to schedule appointments for us to meet with you on our visit to Burlington in September, 1973. With your interest and support, we hope to develop a plan for cooperative work for the 1973-74 school year.

We look forward to discussing this project with you.

This letter outlined the research focus that had been developed during the planning time. We decided that the unifying thread for interviews of administrators, teachers, aides and parents should be the experiences those groups had had with EDC advisors and their opinions about EDC advisors' work. Additional questions would be designed to provide us with information about the context in which EDC advisors worked. We also wanted the interview questions to yield information of interest to people in the communities.

While work on the interview format proceeded we made the introductory visit to Burlington. We talked with the Follow Through administrators and we were able to speak briefly and informally with most of the teachers to explain our purpose in interviewing them.

1.3 SELECTION OF INTERVIEW SAMPLE

Since our research was exploratory and we planned to interview people with several different roles in the Follow Through program, we had to make some choices about which members of particular groups to interview. We felt that all of the administrators who were directly involved with EDC advisors and the Follow Through program should be interviewed. In Burlington, this included the project director and the two principals. We also interviewed the PAC* chairperson, the parent coordinator, and the Follow Through secretary, who was a parent. The information from these interviews was used as background material.

* Policy Advisory Committee for Follow Through

Method of Sampling

The method of modified random selection was utilized in these two sites in order to select manageable numbers of people to interview without relying completely on recommendations.

In Burlington, we were able to talk individually with all eleven pairs of teachers and aides in the Follow Through program. Due to limited resources, we were able to arrange for interviews with only fifteen parents. We used a combination of recommendations and random sampling in both communities in order to choose our sample. We drew the sample from parents of children in classes taught by the same teachers we had from parents of children in classes taught by the same teachers we had interviewed. We asked the PAC chairperson and project director in each community to give us the names of five parents who they considered to be especially active in the program. These five parents were interviewed to get responses from people who were heavily involved in the program. In addition to the five recommended parents, we randomly selected ten other parents. This was done by drawing the names of parents from a hat and matching them with numbers drawn from a hat. An attempt was made to eliminate the same parent's name appearing in the pool more than once, which would happen when parents had more than one child in Follow Through, but the effort was tedious and not completely successful. We assumed that the recommended parents would agree to be interviewed, but made provision for randomly selected parents if parents in the first group selected could not

be reached or if they chose not to be interviewed. The procedure for replacing parents from the primary random list was not totally workable, with the result that only fourteen parents were interviewed in Burlington.

1.4 CONSTRUCTION OF INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

We began work on the interview schedules by concentrating on the questions for teachers. We relied heavily on the interview format for A Study of Teachers in Open Settings separately prepared by researchers at Educational Testing Service, modifying it for our purposes. We then constructed a shorter interview schedule for aides by eliminating some of the questions asked of teachers, making some slight modifications in the remaining questions, and adding a few questions solely for aides. Many of the questions prepared for administrators were modified to suit the different functions which administrators perform. The administrator interview questionnaire was left more open-ended than the teachers' and aides' because we expected greater variety in perspectives from the administrators based on the differences in their jobs. The parents' questionnaire was devised to probe issues that seemed to be relevant and important for parents. It was constructed for use by parent interviewers rather than the EDC researchers themselves and was to be administered without a tape recorder. Parent interviewers would record responses by hand. Therefore, it was considerably simpler and more closed-ended than the other schedules.

1.5 INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

Following our introductory visit to Burlington, interviews were scheduled with the people selected. We arranged to have two-hour blocks of time for interviews with each teacher and administrator and one hour with each aide. In general, interviews with teachers lasted from one to two hours, while interviews with aides lasted between thirty minutes and an hour. The interviews occurred in a variety of settings to utilize available space - offices, libraries, teachers' lounges, storerooms, unused classrooms, etc.

All interviews conducted by the researchers were tape recorded to allow the interviewers to concentrate on asking appropriate probing and follow-up questions. The interviews conducted with parents occurred in private homes and were arranged by the parent-interviewers. Responses to parent interviews were recorded on the question sheets by the parent interviewers, by filling in blanks on closed-ended questions and by writing brief summary statements for open-ended questions or additional comments.

The parent-interviewers were chosen by the PAC chairperson and project director in Burlington. Parent-interviewers' training consisted of two evening sessions, each an hour-and-a-half long. The first session had two purposes: to introduce the prospective parent-interviewers to the project and to the researchers and to give them a chance to look at the questions and suggest improvements. During the introduction, the purposes of the study were set out and the method of selection of interviewees was explained. We

also clarified the terms of payment for their work as parent-interviewers. In Burlington, five parent-interviewers agreed to divide the work and the payment among themselves and therefore received thirty dollars each. The payment was intended to cover the time required for the training sessions, setting up and traveling to interviews, and the interviews themselves. The discussion of the questions familiarized the parent-interviewers with the content and layout of the question sheets and gave them an opportunity to identify questions that seemed inappropriate or poorly phrased. Changes were made in the interview questions as a result of suggestions made by parent interviewers.

The second training session focused on the interviewing and recording process. It began with brief instructions from the researchers on interviewing and recording techniques. For example, parent-interviewers were instructed to repeat questions that interviewees did not understand and to write down interviewees' exact words when summarizing responses to open-ended questions. The next step was for one researcher to interview one of the parent-interviewers, using the question sheets but also tape recording the interview. Parent-interviewers, except the one being interviewed for demonstration purposes, recorded responses as the interview progressed. At the end of this demonstration interview the researchers and parent-interviewers compared their records of the responses. When agreement on the most accurate record could not be reached by comparison, the tape was used to replay the exact response.

This process also provided opportunities for discussion of the interviewing techniques demonstrated by the researcher. Parent-interviewers were then instructed to conduct at least two practice interviews, with each other or with friends who had children in Follow Through, before conducting interviews with the selected parents.

1.6 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The first step in dealing with the data on the interview tapes was to listen to the tapes and put the relevant responses into written form. Transcription would have been the most desirable method, but was not feasible because of the costs involved. Therefore, the researchers listened to the tapes and recorded data on protocol sheets. These sheets simply restated the questions with space for filling in responses. Some of what was said during an interview was not recorded. Most responses were paraphrased. When several points were made on the same topic, they were listed. Particularly relevant and interesting statements were quoted exactly. The major effort at establishing reliability among the three researchers in recording responses was an initial independent recording by researchers of the same interview and comparison of what was recorded and how it was written. A few more interviews were recorded by one researcher and then listened to by a second researcher who checked the protocol. Occasional checks of the tapes during the report-writing stage indicated a high level of

accuracy in the protocol material.

The second step, following the conversion of the taped interviews into written protocol form, was to aggregate responses. This was done by putting together the responses to each question of all members of a single group in one community. For example, all teachers' responses to the question on what they thought children should be learning (chapter 7, question 1) were combined. This procedure allowed us to examine the responses of all members of a group to the same question, making the group - teachers, aides, administrators - the main unit of analysis.

The third step was summarizing responses of all members of a group to a particular question. Categories were developed and the number of people whose responses fell into each category was reported. Care was taken at the summarizing stage to report as fully as possible the variety of responses, including mention of many points made by single individuals. Categorizing always simplified individual responses by combining them with others that are only similar, not identical. In addition, categories are usually less specific than the statements actually made by respondents. For example, when a certain number of teachers are reported as having included "helping children become more independent" as one of their goals for teaching, a number of more specific statements about what that means to individual teachers, and the examples given to illustrate, are glossed over. For this reason, there is a tendency in summarizing responses to give more detail in describing an

unusual response than in describing a uniform response from several people. The bulk of the text of this report is devoted to a fairly straightforward reporting of what people said, in summary form.

The foregoing description of methods of processing the interview data dealt with the taped interviews with teachers, aides and administrators. Since the parent interviews were recorded in written form, and many response categories had been developed before these interviews were conducted, they were much easier to process. The report on the parent interviews is mainly a tabulation of responses to closed-ended questions and a summary of responses to open-ended questions.

Actual analysis of the data followed the summarizing stage. Two forms of analysis were applied, both closely tied to the data in its summary form. One involved comparing the responses of different groups to the same question and drawing inferences for making recommendations based on the differences or similarities among groups. This, of course, applied only to those questions asked of more than one group. The other form of analysis involved drawing inferences, speculating, or making suggestions based on the responses of people in one group to one question or set of questions. The major function of analysis was to identify issues that seemed relevant to the functioning of the program and that would reward further attention, either by the researchers, the EDC staff, or the people in the communities.

There were some difficulties in analyzing responses that should

be noted. This was due in part to the different roles of the members of the administrator group, as well as to the different mode of interviewing the parent group. With teachers and aides, the numbers were equal and the context for working the same - the classroom. There were fewer administrators and their roles were more diverse. In reporting administrators' responses, less aggregation was possible, which, in turn, made it hard to compare the responses of administrators as a group with those of teachers or aides. It was difficult to compare responses of parents with other groups because the method of interviewing them and recording their responses was different. The difficulties have not prevented us from attempting comparisons, but readers of the analysis sections of the report should take these differences into account.

1.7 PROGRESS REPORTS TO THE COMMUNITY

Two progress reports were made to Burlington before the completion of the final report. Written drafts of selected sections of the final report were distributed to the community and the researchers talked with the people there about the material. The progress reports had several purposes. One was to give the people we interviewed an opportunity to participate in the revision of some sections of the final report before it was completed. We had promised them this opportunity when we first arranged to do the interviews in order to avoid the kind of situation where people

cooperate with a research endeavor and then see the publication of its findings with very little on-going knowledge of its process and results. We did not promise to totally revise the report according to the community's suggestions, but did promise to take all suggestions into account and at least to note desires for revision in our final report. Another purpose of the progress reports was to receive comments and suggestions on our work that could be incorporated into the final report to make it a more useful and relevant document. A third purpose of the progress reports was to give the people interviewed a clear understanding of how we were dealing with the materials included in this study so that they could knowledgeably assess its strengths, weaknesses, and applications.

The first progress reports took place in March, 1974. The parent reports had been completed in draft form by this time, so they were presented in their entirety to the parents who had conducted the interviews and to other interested parents and staff. The section of the staff interviews that was reported included questions about opinions on what children should be learning, assessments of the degree to which children in the program were learning those things, and opinions about the value and extent of parent involvement in the school. Conferences were held with Burlington administrators. Teachers and aides met together with some non-Follow Through teachers because the progress report was scheduled during a day when all classes were suspended for in-service activities. This large group was divided into smaller

discussion groups for part of the session.

The meetings began with an overview of the research project, outlining who had been interviewed, what topics had been explored, and a description of the method we were using for summarizing and reporting the data. This description was illustrated by a written document containing actual summaries from the protocol material of responses to one question. Comparison of the summaries with the draft of the section of the report that was based on those summaries provided a clear picture of how the researchers were working with the material. Small group discussions allowed people to say whether they felt the reporting was accurate and whether they felt it warranted revision.

We found by going through this process that there were some points at which our interpretation of the data was different from that of the people we had interviewed. In Burlington, we learned that some people felt that their confidence had been violated by the way the responses were reported. In one case we saw quite clearly that we had included too much personal detail. We concluded from this case that unnecessary personal information was seen by the community as needing to be revised or eliminated. We apologized to the people involved and stated that we would try to avoid inclusion of unnecessary

personal detail. At that time, we failed to understand and appreciate the extent of the problem. The result was that during the second progress report, in early June, the same problem came up, only compounded by having been repeated.

We scheduled a second progress report for early June. This time draft copies of the section we planned to discuss had been sent before we arrived so that they could be read in advance.

We traveled to Burlington in June and met with groups of teachers, aides and some administrators. We discovered that the confidentiality issue was much more serious than we had understood. One major problem was that people in the Burlington Follow Through community felt that they could identify anyone who was described at all in the report. We had thought that the problems in this area would be (1) if names were attached to statements and the report read by people outside the community and (2) if people could be identified with negative comments, particularly comments about individuals. We omitted the names of all people interviewed to deal with the first problem and were careful to avoid the second. But the major issue seemed to be that some Follow Through staff did not want to be identified with their own statements in their own community. They wanted all comments, not just negative ones, to be completely anonymous. We had interpreted our promise of confidentiality to mean that names would not be attached. Some of the

people interviewed interpreted it to mean either that no one would be able to identify them or that no one would ever see what they had said, even if they could not be individually identified.

This was a shock to us since we had tried hard to make our work constructive and had considered ourselves conscientious in the treatment of the data. We agreed to do our best to omit references in the final report which would identify a particular individual, even though we felt that this would render lifeless a report that was already becoming exceedingly general in its tone. Even this compromise was questioned by some who felt that their opinions would be distorted by selective quotation. We agreed that some distortion would necessarily be introduced by the researchers' selection, but asserted that this was unavoidable and that we would take responsibility for it.

The issue of confidentiality and its interpretation was most salient among some of the Follow Through aides. Seeing one's own interview responses in print, however anonymously, can seem too revealing. An additional factor might have been that the clear error made in the first progress report sensitized people to the issue of confidentiality and raised their concern

about that aspect of our reporting. Confidentiality became the predominant theme of the discussions during the June visit and limited exploration of opinions on the substantive content of the draft section being reviewed.

We feel that the most constructive thing we can do on the basis of this experience is to reaffirm the necessity for regular contact between researchers and the people at the site in which research is conducted and emphasize the importance of clear mutual understanding of how the information is to be used. We will be much more careful in the future in explaining how people's responses will be reported.

The full report was sent to Burlington in November, 1974. We requested that the people who had participated in the research review the completed study and send us their comments and suggestions. The discussions and exchange of views between community representatives and EDC Follow Through staff which followed proved to be a complex and very important phase of the total research process. Each comment and suggestion by the community was most carefully considered. Numerous changes were made which reflected the community's concerns and EDC Follow Through's commitment to the integrity of the research process. We feel that a productive balance has been achieved in this final report. This process was completed in March, 1975. The final report will now be distributed to the U. S. Office of Education and shared with EDC Follow Through communities and others interested in the development of Follow Through and open education.

1.8 CRITIQUE OF RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The research procedures for this study were chosen to fulfill two purposes: 1) to develop a broad data base, with a focus on the work of

EDC advisors, as well as to describe the EDC Follow Through program in two communities, and 2) to provide useful formative information to the people at the two community sites.

With regard to our first research purpose, as listed above, open ended interviews were chosen as the method for data collection. This was done to allow issues to emerge that were of concern to the groups interviewed. In our opinion, we feel we have been successful in developing a broad data base and in identifying many issues of importance.

A reporting procedure that proved to be particularly effective was the aggregation of responses of all members of a group to the same question. The advantage of this approach was identification of areas of agreement and disagreement among members of a group and the possibility for generalizations about the opinions and experiences of people in each group. Aggregated responses also facilitated comparisons across groups on those questions asked of more than one group. A disadvantage of this approach was that it concealed some of the important points developed by an individual throughout that person's whole interview. Some individuals interviewed stated themes that recurred throughout their interviews, indicating their importance and providing a wealth of detail on selected issues. Aggregating responses diluted this kind of information.

Another procedure that merits further comment was the training of parents to interview other parents. This was worthwhile both in facilitating data collection for this research project and in confirming our belief that other groups, not only researchers, can collect valuable information. Given the modest amount of training provided and the lack of on-site supervision, the results of these procedures were quite good. The parent-interviewers proved capable and responsible. We were assured

that our decision not to try to tape record interviews with parents was a wise one, even though the lack of such recording made independent verification of responses impossible. Such verification would have been helpful when fuller information about a specific comment was needed for clarification. In addition, such verification would have been helpful in assessing the degree of interviewer influence, as in the case where three of the four parents who had several negative things to say about Follow Through were interviewed by the same parent interviewer.

With regard to our second research purpose - to provide useful formative information, we had hoped to make our findings immediately available to people in the communities by providing feedback at regular intervals during the school year. The need to travel some distance to the community sites limited our ability to develop the kinds of on-going personal relationships and informal reporting procedures we had intended to be an integral part of the process of this research. As the research proceeded, we began to realize that our commitment to detailed interim reports locked us into a kind of writing style that at times became too lengthy and repetitive. This final report would have been more cogent and immediately relevant to community needs had it been shorter and more selective. For example, a few issues could have been singled out as especially important and evidence marshalled from whichever parts of the interview were appropriate. Instead, we tried to report the detail of what was said in response to all questions, so that readers of the report could have the background information to identify issues and make their own inferences, at each stage of the reporting procedure.

We had assured the people at the sites that anything said in the inteviews would be reported in such a way as not to identify individuals. We learned that this was impossible to do in all cases. We now believe that the definition of confidentiality must be spelled out more carefully in advance. It also seems that less rather than more confidentiality should be promised. That is, respondents should be assured that their names will not be attached to statements but should be made aware that some statements will be quoted and that information included to clarify their role in the Follow Through program may make them identifiable to others at their site. This would be less of a problem if data collections methods other than interviewing were used.

Lastly, another problem we encountered that limited the formative use of our research was the unexpectedly large amount of time required to process the open-ended interview data. Instead of going through two complete cycles of data collection and reporting, we were able to complete only one cycle, with the final reporting coming late in the year. In order to be used formatively, research and feedback needs to be conducted in shorter cycles, perhaps a few months in duration.

Another way of describing what now seems to us to be a potentially superior research design involves making a sharper distinction between the two functions of (1) providing useful formative information to people in the sites and (2) developing analyses of important issues based on the data. The first function needs short cycles of data collection and reporting in order for the data not to seem out of date to the people who provided it. The second function needs more time and a variety of data to be done well. Therefore, a more promising design might begin with simple data collection procedures designed to reveal some important issues. An example of such a procedure is the one described by Rippey (Studies in Transactional Evaluation 1973, pp. 14-66). He explains how questionnaires may be constructed out of comments written by the "subjects" of the research. The questionnaires provide a quick and efficient means of assessing the amount of agreement or disagreement about issues raised by the people in the sites themselves. Researchers could then select from the issues raised, ones that seemed especially important and amenable to further research. We have identified such issues in the research reported here, but it required a full year's exploration.

The process of identifying and exploring issues in a variety of ways can make it possible for the researchers to develop a careful analysis of several of those issues, backed by various kinds of data, during and after the time when they are collecting

and reporting data in the sites. The analysis would not have to be reported with the same speed or in the same form as the raw data. It might, for example, come out several months after the data collecting had ceased and take the form of a brief article addressed to a wide audience, including people in the sites and others concerned about Follow Through and Open Education. We hope to move in this direction with future EDC Follow Through research.

The final report on the 1973-74 EDC Follow Through research will be shared with the people in the Burlington Follow Through program, the EDC advisory staff, the U. S. Office of Education, people in the other nine EDC Follow Through communities and others interested in the development of Follow Through and Open Education.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: BURLINGTON TEACHERS, AIDES, ADMINSTRATORS, AND PARENTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

We asked a few background questions of all the groups we interviewed in order to get a picture of their previous work experience, educational background, length of time in Follow Through, and the way they learned about and became involved in Follow Through. The responses to these questions are summarized here in order to give a picture of the people we interviewed. Some of this background information was useful to the researchers in understanding differences in responses to the succeeding questions in the interview. For example, experienced teachers tended to respond to some questions differently from teachers who were just beginning their teaching careers. However, the major function of this information is to suggest that the backgrounds of the people we talked to are much like school personnel and parents who are not involved in Follow Through.

2.2 TEACHER BACKGROUND

Education. Of the eleven teachers in Follow Through, two teachers had not completed college but were certified to teach under Vermont laws. Both are taking courses to earn degrees. Seven teachers had bachelor's degrees. Two had master's degrees. One said she was taking courses toward a master's degree.

Teaching Experience. The average (mean) number of years teaching for the eleven teachers was 8.5 years, counting the current year. Some teachers were beginning their first year of teaching; one was in her thirty-fourth teaching year. The average (mean) length of time teaching in Follow Through was 2.5 years, with a range from one to five years.

Non-teaching Experience. Four teachers had worked outside the field of teaching. Their jobs included office worker, waitress, telephone operator, journalist, editorial secretary, and research assistant.

Entry to Follow Through. Three teachers had been teaching in non-Follow Through classes and were asked to become Follow Through teachers; all three felt they had the opportunity to choose whether to get involved with Follow Through. Two teachers visited the school because they had heard about Follow Through and were interested in the open classroom. They liked what they saw during their visits and applied for teaching positions. Only one teacher had taught in an open classroom before becoming a teacher in Follow Through. One teacher had been teaching in another Burlington school and visited both of the schools with EDC Follow Through classes. She liked the approach to teaching and the feelings among the staff in both schools and applied for a transfer to both. It was only after she had been transferred that she learned about the Follow Through program. Two other teachers said they applied for teaching jobs in the school without special knowledge of or interest in Follow Through. One teacher had been working in the learning center (library) at the school before moving into the classroom. One had been an aide in Follow Through and earned enough credits

to be certified as a teacher. Another had been a student teacher at the school.

2.3 AIDE BACKGROUND

Education. Before becoming aides in Follow Through, four of the eleven aides we interviewed had not completed high school. Eight had high school diplomas. Three of those had post-high school education - one had some college, another had two years of nursing school, and a third had completed college. Only the aide who had a college degree said she had not continued her education since becoming an aide. All of the other ten aides had taken some courses, though not all were taking courses at the time we interviewed them.

Experience in Follow Through. The average (mean) number of years the aides had been in Follow Through was 3.8 years. The range was 1.5 to 5 years.

Experience before Follow Through. Ten of the eleven aides had held jobs before becoming aides in Follow Through. The only one who had not was the one who began working with a college degree. The jobs aides held included nursing, babysitting, sales, office work, and waitressing. Three had pre-school experience, two of those in Head Start.

Entry into Follow Through. Six aides became involved in Follow Through because their children were in Follow Through classes. Involvement in Follow Through as parents included helping with testing (administered by SRI), volunteering in children's classes, and participating in Follow Through activities for parents. Four mentioned liking to work

with children as reasons for their interest in the job. Two had taken special training courses for aides before beginning their work. One said her taking the job was a matter of pride for her, pride in being able to do a job and finish college.

A Comparison of Teachers' and Aides' Experience in FT

Teachers		Aides
Years Teaching	Years in FT	Years in FT
mean=8.5	mean=2.5	mean=3.8
range=1-34	range=1-5	range=1.5-5

2.4 ADMINISTRATOR BACKGROUND

Education. The two principals had both bachelor's and master's degrees and the project director had a bachelor's degree. All three mentioned that they are still taking courses in the Burlington area.

Administrative Experience in Follow Through. The project director had been in her position for five years.* One principal was beginning his fourth year with Follow Through, and the other was beginning his second. The average (mean) length of time in Follow Through, counting the current year, was 3.6 years.

Teaching Experience. All three administrators previously had been teachers, the average (mean) number of years being 4.8 years. The project director* had taught 1 1/2 years. One principal had taught for five years, the other eight.

Administrative Experience. Both principals had previous administrative experience before coming to Burlington. One had been a vice-

*The Burlington Follow Through Director, indicated in this report, resigned effective February 1, 1974 and a new director took over.

principal and principal for a total of five years. The other previously had been an administrative principal.

Experience Outside the Field of Education. Two of the three administrators had worked outside the field of education. Their jobs included textile lab worker, waitress, and bakery worker.

Entry into Follow Through. The project director* had been approached by a principal to apply for the position in 1969, a year after the program had started. She was interviewed by various people in the school and met with EDC staff. One principal entered the school and the program the following year. He was selected by a process which included parents, the home-school coordinator, the Follow Through director, principals, assistant superintendents, and the superintendent. The other principal was already at his current school when that school was added to the EDC Follow Through program

2.5 PARENT BACKGROUND

Responding parents:	14 mothers of Follow Through children
Current employment:	6 mothers reported working at this time 3 full-time 3 part-time 8 reported not working at this time
Education:	3 reported 8th grade or less 3 reported some high school 7 reported completed high school 1 reported some college
Number of children in parent's care:	Range: from 2 - 9 children 4 mothers: 2 children 5 mothers: 3 children 3 mothers: 4 children 1 mother: 7 children 1 mother: 9 children

* See page 30

Ages of children:	Range: from 2 months to 18 years of age
Children who had participated in Head Start:	7 mothers reported having had children in Headstart

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES: BURLINGTON TEACHERS AND AIDES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers and aides were asked to describe a "typical day" in their classroom. This section was included to elicit a broad description of the teaching day.

3.2 SUMMARY OF TEACHER AND AIDE RESPONSE

Based on the responses given, we have selected the following categories for inclusion in this report.

1. Organization of classroom learning
2. Planning for classroom activities
3. Special qualities teachers note about aides they work with and aides note about teachers they work with
4. Time spent outside of class on work related to teaching

1. Organization of classroom learning

Four basic patterns of classroom organization emerged from the responses of Burlington teachers and aides. Pattern "A" is characterized by a fairly structured morning, teacher directed and focused on academic skills and an afternoon including more creative and free choice activities. Pattern "B" is characterized by the predominant teaching arrangement of "three

adults-three groups," the three adults being the teacher, aide, and student teacher. Each adult is responsible for a group of children, although the children may work in groups or individually. Free time for projects and choice of activities tends to occur in the afternoon. Pattern "C" emphasizes a rhythm of activities, moving back and forth from large group activities to individual and small group activities. Large group activities are used to tie things together. By directing the rhythm of the day, the teacher is able to focus activities and to allow children time to choose what they would like to do. In Pattern "D", the children are highly involved in planning and taking responsibility for their daily activities. Although individualized activity predominates, there are times for small group sessions and for the whole group to get together. Adults periodically remind children to do their skill work and circulate to help.

2. Planning for classroom activities

Most of the teachers take primary responsibility for planning. Teachers and aides work together in class and discuss things after school. Two teachers felt there was little time for planning together. Two other teachers indicated that all adults in their classrooms are equally involved in the planning.

Most aides indicated that the teacher takes the lead in structuring the day. They felt that they had opportunities for input, such as giving their ideas, opinions, and planning for their own groups. Three aides emphasized their feeling that they share equally in planning the classroom day with the teachers.

3. Some special qualities teachers note about aides they work with and aides note about teachers they work with

This topic is included to give a sense of some of the qualities which teachers and aides value in the person they work with most closely in their classrooms.

Most teachers interviewed mentioned liking each other and working well together as very important in their teacher-aide relationships. Five teachers stressed the value of working together for several years, saying it takes time to develop good communication and consistent adult behavior with children. They talked about personal qualities they valued in their aides, such as sensitivity and knowledge of the school neighborhood. They appreciated not having to give a lot of directions to their aides and the aides' ability to initiate activities. Perhaps, most of all, teachers valued having another adult to relate to in the classroom,

Most aides emphasized that their teachers ask their opinions, welcome their suggestions, and consult them before making changes.

Sharing experiences and talking about the children is considered important. Aides who valued working on their own appreciated working with teachers who value that capacity in their aides. Several aides mentioned that they like it when things are organized and they know what they are going to do. Two aides addressed the importance of sharing work equally with the teacher. Several aides noted that they value working with the same teacher over time, recognizing that it takes time to build good working relationships.

4. Time spent outside of class on work related to teaching

This question was intended to explore some of the dimensions of teaching (when and where teachers and aides do different kinds of work related to teaching) that are not clearly evident in a description of their actual classroom day. The following categories emerged from their responses:

Teachers do work related to teaching before and after school, in evenings, on weekends, and on in-service days and during evening meetings. Examples of the kinds of work done during these times include planning, record keeping, talking about the children, making things, and correcting children's work. Most teachers report that they spend an average of two hours a day, before and/or after school, on work related to teaching, with some teachers spending all of this time at school, preferring not to take

work home. Several teachers made the point that they have lives outside of their teaching responsibilities that take priority during the time they are at home.

Aides reported where and when they do work related to teaching in the same categories as the teachers. The kinds of work done at these times included planning, discussing children, record keeping, preparation of the classroom, running off worksheets, checking children's work, reading to learn about a subject, developing ideas, and attending meetings. The overall impression is that aides give a great deal of time and energy to work related to their teaching. The range of their activities is broad and reflects individual commitments to and definitions of the needs of teaching.

3.3 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER AND AIDE RESPONSE

The four basic patterns mentioned above describe trends in classroom organization. Most classrooms combine some elements of each pattern, although each classroom predominantly illustrates one of the patterns. These patterns suggest a variety of possibilities for structure with openness.

Most teachers and aides view the teacher as assuming primary responsibility for planning the classroom day. Some indicated that all adults in their classrooms share the planning equally. In all instances, aides are involved in the planning process. Definitions of "planning" varied. Teachers and aides seem to seek agreement on

the overall structure of the day, with freedom for spontaneous response within that structure.

Teachers and aides value working well together and recognize that it takes time to develop a good working relationship. Teachers appreciate aides who independently initiate activities, and aides value opportunities to work on their own. Achieving a good balance of teamwork and independent response seems important to all the teaching adults.

The overall impression is that these teachers and aides spent a great deal of time and energy, in addition to their teaching day with children, in activities that are directly related to strengthening their work during class time. Teaching doesn't "just happen." A sense of how much time it takes to prepare well for teaching in proportion to how quickly children can complete some activities is brought home by the comment of one teacher - "It takes a while for you to plan it, and it takes them only ten minutes to finish it."

3.4 DETAIL OF TEACHER AND AIDE RESPONSE

1. Organization of classroom learning:

In this category we have included composite descriptions of four basic patterns of classroom organization. These patterns emerged from reviewing the interviews of all Burlington Follow Through teachers. Each pattern includes examples from several teachers whose classroom organization seemed to be most closely represented by that particular pattern. Each pattern illustrates

a significantly different approach to the organization of classroom learning during a "typical day." The purpose is to outline the major trends in classroom organization represented by all the teachers and aides interviewed.

Pattern "A"

Pattern "A" is characterized by a fairly structured morning, directed by the teacher, in which children work on skills related to reading, writing, and math. Children may work independently on individual assignments or in small groups with an adult. During this time the teacher may read aloud to the group; children may read aloud to an adult or silently; the group may work on a class newspaper or in individual journals. The teacher sometimes works with a group on one topic and adults often work with individual children. At the end of the morning there may be a free choice of activities for children who complete the academic requirements for the morning.

The afternoon continues the morning focus on completion of assignments as well as including more creative and free choice activities such as music, creative movement, creative writing, and individual projects chosen by the children. There may be a time towards the end of the day when children can choose to work in the learning and resource centers outside the classroom. This "free choice" time is often extended as the teacher gets to know the group and what kinds of choices and freedoms the children are ready to handle constructively.

Pattern "B"

Pattern "B" is characterized by the predominant teaching arrangement of "three adults - three groups." In these classes there are three teaching adults (teacher, aide, student teacher or two teachers and one aide). For reading and related activities, math and sometimes arts and crafts, each adult is responsible for a group of children. During these group times, the children may work together with the adult as a group or may work on individual assignments. Some groups seem to be arranged by ability; others seem to be arranged in order to facilitate the sharing of responsibility among the adults. One variation has four groups of children. Three groups work with adults while the fourth group chooses their own activities. The groups rotate so that all children get a chance to work in a group and on their own. Another variation has each adult taking primary responsibility for a particular learning activity (language arts, math, and arts and crafts) and the children stay with their group and rotate to each activity.

As in Pattern "A", the emphasis is on the more academic skills in the morning. There may be a choice of quiet activities as children complete individual assignments. There may also be a short "free" period for the entire class at the end of the morning or getting together to listen to a story.

The afternoon may continue with some teacher-directed group activities, such as printing, arts and crafts, reading and drama. Free time for the whole group to work in projects such as weaving and making maps and for children to choose areas of interest (science, workbench, playhouse) tends to occur during the afternoon. Adults circulate and work with individuals. At the end of the day the class may get together to share what they've done.

Pattern "C"

Pattern "C" is characterized by a rhythm of activities, moving back and forth from large group activities to individual and small group activities.

Each class emphasizing this pattern tends to start the day with a large group session (singing together, developing a class newspaper, talking about the calendar, weather, science, sharing ideas). This is followed by a work period where adults work with individuals and small groups. This may include content such as numbers, shapes, colors, math games, language, and paper and pencil exercises. One teacher said, "We accomplish most of the learning in that time." Children may also work on individual projects or in areas of their choice. Then the whole group tends to come together for a story time, perhaps with a follow-up activity. The group may talk about things they did in the morning. This pattern (large group - individual work or free choice of activity time) may re-occur several times during the day. Large group times are used to tie things together. By directing the rhythm of the day, the teacher is able

to direct activities and to allow children time to choose what they would like to do.

Pattern "D"

Pattern "D" is characterized by a high degree of involvement of the children in planning and taking responsibility for their daily activities.

The day begins with a large group planning meeting. Free choice activities, based on children's interests, take the first major period of the day. Adults may introduce an activity and children can choose to participate. Children choose math and reading activities, as well as working on individual projects and in areas. Then the group gets together for a story, often having children read to the group. This is followed by a large block of time for quiet work.... "Messy things are usually ruled out." There is a free flowing pattern--children working individually, in small groups, with adults and on their own. There are periodic reminders by adults for children to do their skill work. "If one has not done anything academic by 10:30, it's a good idea to get to do some reading or get to do some math." Some children write their own contracts for reading and math work.

The afternoon may begin with the teacher reading in the library, to those who would like to come, while other children work on their contracted assignments. This is followed by a reminder..."it's understood that if you have not tackled your math by 1:00, now is the time." Children do individualized math in workbooks. Teachers

work with individuals and small groups at various unscheduled times during the day. Three reading groups meet daily with teachers. The day is completed by a sharing time for the whole group. Children chair this activity and those who would like to share have to sign up during the day.... "Children have to think about it - developing some kind of sense of internal planning."

Some comments about gym, recess, snack and lunch time, which occur daily in every classroom:

Gym takes place at a set time of the day. The gym teacher comes to work with the group one day a week at this time and the teachers and aides supervise follow-up of the activities introduced by the gym teacher. One teacher added, referring to her own class,

> "We have recently decided that we like to do gym in the morning instead of the afternoon, which is a very revolutionary thing at Wheeler School. All first graders always do gym in the afternoon. It's taken me four years to figure out that this does not have to be."

This teacher has chosen an early gym time to get to the outdoor space when no one else is using it. On the day when the gym teacher comes they have gym at the prescribed time, but every other day the class has more structured gym activities in the morning and free play at recess in the afternoon. This decision was made because the teacher felt that "...things that are a little more difficult and require a little more energy and organization I find we do better in the morning."

This teacher used her judgment as to when she and the children function best for this kind of activity and felt able to make the necessary changes.

Each class also seems to have a daily recess time which is mostly for free play with adult supervision. Teachers and/or aides go outdoors with the class - sometimes they take turns. As one aide put it, "They (the children) can do anything they want to except for fighting. I'm just there to watch." Another aide said she feels it's a good social time for the children.

Snack and lunch time seem to be occasions for children taking responsibilities and helping to serve. These are also times for good talk and a chance to learn about individual children. As one aide put it,

> "During this time we pick up on a lot of conversation with the children - we find out if they're having problems and why their day may not have been going well."

At the time of these interviews the procedure was for each class to eat lunch in its own classroom. Several teachers and aides expressed their feeling that children learned a lot at lunch about manners, counting, serving food to others, taking turns, and sharing. As one teacher expressed it, "I like the responsibility that the children have. I like the atmosphere of sitting around the table and passing things around." Her feeling was that lunch was a pleasant time.

Several teachers and aides were disturbed about plans for

the new city-wide hot lunch program which was going into effect in a few weeks. As described, the new hot lunch program would involve large groups of children going to the gym to eat pre-packaged tray lunches under the supervision of paid aides who do not work in the classroom. Three teachers said they had appealed to the principal to at least let the trays be served in Follow Through classrooms.

One teacher asked if there was something in Follow Through guidelines - "about eating with the children and the importance of having that as an experience."

At the time of the interviews it seemed that, despite protests, the new hot lunch program was going ahead as planned. One teacher said, "My perception now is that it's going to have to fail a little bit and then maybe we can try again."

2. Planning for classroom activities:

All teachers and aides were asked about their part in planning classroom activities and whether they plan together. All responded to these questions, some in more detail than others. The responses address some of the on-going issues for teachers and aides as they evolve styles of working together.

Teacher's responses:

Nine teachers indicated that the teacher takes primary responsibility for planning, although all of the aides are involved, in a variety of ways, in the planning process.

In one classroom the adults discuss things every day and the teacher said, "I'm always happy to share the planning with them (aide and student teacher). They have not volunteered. I always ask for their suggestions."

In another class, the teacher, aide, and student teacher met to plan activities for the following week. In this situation, the teacher said she initiates most things but both (aide and student teacher) feel free to bring their ideas in. "We share a lot. At first they were reluctant to initiate but more and more they are carrying out their own ideas."

The issue of initiating ideas and activities re-occurs in a number of interviews. One teacher said, "I found myself getting into a problem by not taking more of a leadership role." She went on to say that she's now taking a more active role in planning and working to get approval from the other teaching adults. Another teacher addressed initiating with regard to her aide, saying that the aide is starting to take more initiative to do things on her own and the teacher is pleased and is encouraging her. This teacher and aide have worked together before this year. Still another teacher said she works on plans, and her aide contributes suggestions and they work well as a team. She contrasted this with an earlier experience where, "I was the teacher and she was the aide and never initiated anything."

One planning pattern seems to be that teacher and aide discuss

things after school and then the teacher does most of the planning and lets the aide know the kinds of things they will be doing at the beginning of the day. The aide makes suggestions if she wants to.

Two teachers indicated that all adults in the classroom were equally involved in planning. In one class, each adult takes responsibility for a major activity and they brainstorm on how each person's activity will relate to the others. They plan on a weekly basis. The second teacher said, "The aide, student teacher and I might be doing the same thing," and, "I view our relationship very much as a team teaching kind of situation where we would each be planning and introducing activities."

Aides' responses:

Eight aides indicated that the teacher takes the lead in structuring the day. All of these aides felt that they had opportunities to contribute to the planning, and these opportunities for input took a variety of forms. One aide said, "The teacher has the full day planned and I follow along." She added that if she has an opinion about anything in the class, she feels free to tell the teacher about it and feels that the teacher is responsive. She also said she feels the teacher would tell her if she's doing something wrong, but this hasn't happened so far. Another aide said that she and the teacher she works with, "Have been together long enough." They have worked together for several years and the teacher always asks her opinion, so she feels she has made all the changes she wants to. They plan together and discuss the children several afternoons each

week.

Another aide said she and the teacher discuss the class each morning and each prepares what they are going to do. She added that each day's structure is pretty much the same, so she knows what she's going to do and likes that.

Another aide said she feels very much at ease with the teacher she works with and at least once a week the aide, teacher and student teacher try to sit down and plan together. Often the teacher will suggest something and "we'll try it." This aide has had more experience with Follow Through than the teacher she works with, and was concerned not to "come on too heavy" and asked the teacher to please tell her if something was not to her liking. The teacher seems to have welcomed any suggestions her aide has made and seems to value her aide's experience. They talk together about problems and ideas and it's mutually beneficial.

Another experienced aide said that once a week she and the teacher usually have a planning meeting. The aide feels this is good because the teacher can then see the things her aide is coming up with and can say whether she approves. This aide feels there are times for an aide to take responsibility on her own and times to consult with the teacher. When the teacher proposes any changes, she asks her aide's opinion. She went on to say, "I feel that most teachers are fair" and rather than have long meetings at the end of the day "I'd much rather she (the teacher) came up with what she wanted and if I didn't

like it I'd be very honest and tell her...which makes a good team."

Three aides emphasized their feeling that they share equally with their teachers in planning the classroom day.

One of these aides said that the teacher initially decided which learning area the aide should be responsible for and now the aide is in charge of this broad activity and has to plan and prepare for it. The teacher and aide plan together to coordinate what they are doing. They often have a topic for the week and this helps to integrate activities. Another aide said that she and the teacher come in regularly before the children arrive to get the room ready, talk about what happened the day before and plan how they will share responsibility for the coming day. The third aide who responded in this way said she and the teacher plan together regularly and share the same things. She commented that they have been working together for several years, and "The conversation between us is great" - she indicated that they communicate very well. "We plan our day ahead of time...we have things to talk about."

3. Some special qualities teachers note about aides they work with and aides note about teachers they work with

This topic is somewhat different than the others in this chapter in that it is not based on responses to a specific question asked of teachers and aides. It is included to give a sense of some of the qualities which teachers and aides seem to value in the person they work most closely with in their classrooms.

Teacher's responses:

"We like each other and get along."

"We get along and work fine together."

"We work well together. We like each other and think alike. It helps us be consistent."

Teachers seem to highly value this sense of personal compatability when working in a classroom with another adult.

Five teachers specifically mentioned the value of a teacher and aide working together for several years. It takes time to develop good communication and consistent adult behavior with children. One teacher said, "It's better than getting used to someone new each year." Another said it took her a while to get used to working with an aide--at first she felt she was being "scrutinized" by another adult in the classroom. It has worked out well over time.

One teacher talked about personal qualities which she recognized and valued in her aide. "...my aide is the kindest, most loving, most accepting person of children I think I have ever worked with.... She is the best one to deal with individual problems - the children will always talk to her." This teacher went on to say that her aide has children of her own whom she brought up in the neighborhood and all the parents know she has the children's interests at heart. Sensitivity to children and knowledge of their neighborhood is a valued quality mentioned by several teachers. The fact that an aide has children of her own is noted as an asset by teachers.

Three teachers stated their appreciation that they don't have to do a lot of directing. One teacher felt she had a marvelous aide and expanded on that to say, "She's a real teacher, even though she hasn't had the (formal) training she has the instincts and she learns all the time." She felt it was just like having another teacher in the room. Another teacher complimented her aide's ability to initiate things, saying, "My aide is just so competent that she thinks of things to do on her own that I should have thought of...She's very good at doing things...without me directing her."

Another category mentioned frequently by teachers relates to the value of having another adult to work with in the classroom. One teacher, in noting that her aide works with individual children as one of the "teachers", added that she feels that this adult help is essential to the individualized way she's been teaching. Another teacher said of her aide, "She can sometimes tell me something about a child that I didn't know, because she was working with the child. This is a good help too." Another teacher mentioned that she had never worked with an aide before. She feels she has a really good aide and has found it a challenge to make good use of her. She really appreciates the fact that they like each other and work well together. One teacher clearly stated that she liked having a number of adults working in the classroom this year. She went on to describe some concerns she has about potential dangers to the growth of children's independence in having several adults in the room and

suggested some ways adults can work together to avoid those kinds kinds of difficulties.

> I think it has a lot to do with the adults because I also have been very concerned in other situations with adults in the classroom, because I also think it's extremely important that children become independent, and one of the great dangers of having a great number of adults around is that the children have so much one-to-one attention that it's very difficult for them to become independent. I think these particular adults understand that about children and so they tend less than some adults to get trapped into having kids be dependent upon them when they needn't be. And it requires a lot of communication. We're also fair game for someone who I say no to and there are ...other adults that he can make the rounds to see if they might...So consistency and a lot of communication is very important.

Teachers generally seemed to be quite sensitive to the different personal qualities and abilities of the aides they work with and seem concerned to see that work be shared according to what people feel good about and ready to do and according to what they do well.

Aides' responses:

Six aides emphasized that their teachers ask their opinions, welcome their suggestions, and consult them before making changes. Feeling that their opinions are valued by the teacher is considered important by the aides.

Several aides stated that they valued sharing experiences - talking with the teacher about what the aide did with a child and what the child said and having the teacher do the same. Most aides liked the opportunity to share in the planning and the opportunity to consult with the teacher on a regular basis. One aide commented that she likes talking things over with the teacher and having

a choice about which activities she will work on. She likes to help individual children who are having difficulties and she likes to introduce special projects. Another aide mentioned that she valued having the teacher ask her if she'd like to take an activity, and offer to take turns. The element of feeling she has a choice about what she does is important.

Four aides who seemed to value working on their own appreciated working with teachers who value that capacity in their aides. One aide said, "I'm lucky that (the current teacher) and most of the teachers I've worked with have allowed me to work on my own." Another said she feels it's important for an aide not to always be told what to do by the teacher, but to use her own imagination.

Two aides addressed the importance of the teacher and aide "sharing the same things." As one put it, "...we share the work equally, right on the same level."

Several aides said that they valued working with the same teacher over time. One aide who felt that she and the teacher she works with have a "great relationship" went on to say, "We understand each other and respond to each other's needs... We had to work at it." She recognized that it takes time to build a good working relationship.

One aide mentioned that she likes it when the teacher takes the lead in the overall organization of classroom activities. She mentioned the example of the gym period, when the teacher whom she works with will divide the children into groups, "so we each have only a few children to work with and can get it done properly for

them." Another aide said she likes it when things are organized, when the teachers give directions as to which adult should take which group of children. Another aide said she liked the fact that the room is "prestructured" and she knows what she is going to do.

Time spent outside of class on work related to teaching

This question was intended to explore some of the dimensions of teaching (when and where teachers and aides do different kinds of work related to teaching) that are not clearly evident in a description of their actual school day. What are some of the things teachers and aides do outside of class time to make their work with children possible and effective? The following chart gives an overall picture of the categories which the (11) teachers and (11) aides interviewed mentioned in relation to this question.

Categories (where/when)	No. of Responses	
	Teachers	Aides
- In school (before and after school)	10	10
before school:	4	4
after school:	9	8
- (During the school day in school) (noon, recess, while other adult takes charge)	5	2
- At home - evenings	8	5
- Weekends (at home or at school)	3	1
- In-service days	1	2
- Meetings after school (faculty)	2	1
- Meetings at night (parents, etc.)	1	2
- "Constantly think of it"	2	0

Work before and after school:

Planning was specifically mentioned by (9) teachers as work they do during this time. Responses ranged from daily preparation to longer range planning. Two teachers emphasized meeting with their aide and student teacher to plan, go over anecdotal records, talk about the kids and what they (teacher, aide, student teacher) are doing and how they might do things differently. They considered this joint planning an important part of their day. One teacher defined planning as things directly related to organizing the classroom.

Making things, buying things with Follow Through petty casn, collecting materials, preparing new activities, collecting an "idea" file, thinking about places to go on trips and cleaning up are an important part of their teaching. Three teachers reported using this time for record keeping. Two teachers included correcting individual children's work and reading children's journals and writing notes in them as some of the work they did after school.

Kindergarten teachers referred to doing speech therapy with individual children two afternoons a week, after their classes are dismissed.

One teacher talked about having children in her class "messing around" informally after school, as a way for her to get to know them better. Another teacher said she talks with parents after school.

Most teachers reported that they spend about two hours a day at school (before and/or after school day) on work related to teaching with some teachers spending a longer time at school, preferring not

to also take work home. (See section on work at home). These figures would seem to begin to dispel the well-known myth of the six hour teaching day!

Work during the school day: (at noon, recess, and while the aide is in charge)

Five teachers referred to things they did which were related to teaching at times during the school day when they were not directly working with children. Correcting individual children's work and evaluation of children's progress were mentioned here. One teacher reported making home visits to parents every Tuesday while the aide takes charge of the class. Another teacher specifically said that the noon hour was a valuable time for her to meet with other teachers.

Work at home, in the evening:

This category was mentioned by eight teachers. It included the fullest expression of teachers' feelings about doing work related to teaching at home, as well as including a listing of the kinds of work done at home. A sampling of these responses will be reported for individual teachers.

-- A beginning teacher said that by 3:30 she usually doesn't want to stay so she takes whatever she's doing home - sometimes it takes all evening. Making reading and math games were specifically mentioned and seemed to suggest a problem common to new teachers in a school in which materials may be present but do not seem to be readily available:

"Sometimes I know they (the materials) are in the school but I'm not sure where to put my hand on them...it's less frustrating for me to sit down and make it than to try to hunt it up."

-- "I only do things at home if there's a special reason (i.e. preparing for parent conferences). I try not to carry my work home because I've got a life there too!"

-- "I usually spend about an hour a night working at home, making up work for 23 kids at 23 levels."

-- "Although I do some preparation of materials and record keeping at home, I try not to bring work home - it interferes with my family."

-- "Make charts and materials at home. I spend less time now because I've just gotten many materials and before, I had to make everything. Also, my husband has finally said to me, 'You know there is an end to the (school) day!'"

-- "Writing notes to parents and talking with parents on the phone."

-- "Once I get home, with a couple of children and involvement... elsewhere, it's just very difficult to find time to work at home. I spend most of my time doing work related to teaching at school."

Four of the teachers responding in this category make the point quite clearly that they have lives outside of their teaching responsibilities that take priority during the time they are at home. It seems important to realize that teachers are people and their lives involve many different roles.

Work on weekends:

This category was mentioned by three teachers as an occasional supplement to other times, doing such things as preparing materials for individual children and preparing new activities. One teacher said she spends some time on weekends collecting materials, but is trying to do that more at school. Another commented that she does more work on weekends at the beginning of the school year..."usually don't take things home after January."

In-service days

One teacher reported doing work in her room related to her teaching on in-service days.

Meetings after school:

This category simply included "faculty meetings."

Meetings at night:

One teacher referred to attending parent meetings.

"Constantly Thinking of it":

This final category conveyed a sense that these teachers consider their teaching an on-going part of their lives, not restricted in any final sense to where and when work related to teaching takes place. One teacher commented, "You're never free of it--even in the summer time. I'll see things and think, oh - this might be good for..." Another just said, "I feel like I'm constantly thinking about it."

These responses to the question about spending time outside the class on work related to teaching are not expected to be all inclusive. They were these (11) teachers' immediate responses to the question,

asked during a complex and lengthy interview session. The numbers of responses in each category simply suggest major trends of when, where and what kinds of work teachers do related to their teaching. The largest numbers seem to refer to the most regular kinds of work, which occurs daily or frequently. The smaller numbers seem to occur in the more occasional categories.

Work before and after school:

Ten aides responded that they did work related to their teaching at school before and after the school day. Seven aides mentioned planning during this time. Five specifically reported doing some planning activities with the teacher (discussing children; planning a conference with the teacher; talk with the teacher about what they can do to make things better; talk about problems and ideas - "it's mutually beneficial", we (teacher and aide) plan our day ahead of time, and have things to talk about.) The emphasis here was on the communication in their planning.

Record keeping and preparation of the classroom were included in these responses. One aide said, "I make up a paper for work." Another said she does "lots of running off worksheets - some I've made up myself" and plans the work for her group. A kindergarten aide mentioned doing speech therapy, with children from other classes, in the afternoon. One aide commented that she doesn't do much during this time and feels she should do more.

Work related to teaching done during the school day (gym, noon and recess)

Two aides referred to work done during this time. One reported that during the noon hour, while the children are away, she talks with the teacher about the class. Another referred to gym and recess as valuable times to check children's work and get other work ready.

Work at home, in the evening:

Five aides mentioned doing some kinds of work in the evening. Responses included doing some typing when needed; correcting children's work; developing an idea for an activity.

Work on weekends:

One aide mentioned that she comes in every weekend with her own children to care for the animals in the classroom.

In-service days:

One aide reported doing work related to teaching on in-service days; another also mentioned running things off at this time.

Meetings after school:

One aide mentioned attending afternoon meetings related to teaching.

Meetings at night:

One aide specified attending parent meetings; another said "I come back to any activity."

General comments:

One aide commented, "You have to give of your own time before class and after class - there's just no other way." Another aide directly stated, "I spend a lot of time at school."

Again, these responses suggest that each aide spends a varied amount of time on different kinds of work related to teaching outside of the school day. The major emphasis is given to work done before and after school, on breaks during the school day and at home. The range of activities mentioned is broad and reflects individual degrees of involvement in and definition of the needs of teaching.

CHAPTER 4

BURLINGTON TEACHERS: WHO THEY WORK WITH AND HOW THEY VIEW THE TEACHERS' ROLE IN THE SCHOOL

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers were asked a series of four questions. The first question asked them to list the adults they worked with, other than EDC advisors and their own aides. The next question asked who teachers turned to with problems they couldn't solve on their own. The third and fourth questions probed teachers' feelings about whether they had enough influence in their own classrooms, their school, and the Follow Through program.

The purpose of these questions was to elicit information about who teachers work with other than EDC advisors and their classroom aides and to get an idea about how the teachers feel about their role in the school. This information is important in assessing how the work of EDC advisors fits into the school and the Follow Through program as a whole.

The two questions about teachers' assessment of their ability to influence what happens in their own classrooms, their school, and the program as a whole, were intended to help us get a sense of whether the teachers feel independent and effective or whether they feel they must primarily respond to the directions of others.

4.2 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Burlington Follow Through teachers reported working regularly with a wide range of people: administrators, coordinators, other teachers, resource people, specialists and representatives from social agencies

The teachers interviewed were able to specify the kinds of assistance they felt were available and were able to give examples of ways in which they have worked with others in the school and in the Follow Through program.

In general, most teachers felt they had enough influence in their own classrooms to do what was needed. They indicated feeling independent and effective in this area. Many teachers indicated satisfaction with the opportunities available for them to have influence in their school and in the Follow Through program. Several teachers discussed their reasons for feeling that the extent of their influence was more limited outside of the classroom.

4.3 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

The most striking impression from the responses of Burlington Follow Through teachers is that these teachers mention an unusually high number of people whom they work with regularly in a variety of ways. In many schools, teachers might be expected to mention working with the principal and other teachers, as these teachers do. The project director and parent coordinator are positions created by the Follow Through program. In Burlington, teachers also mentioned working with Learning Center and Resource Center personnel; reading, speech and physical education specialists; a home-school coordinator and social service agency staff. This would seem to have important implications for the work of EDC advisors. If Burlington teachers can obtain assistance from so many available resources in their local system, then the kinds of assistance offered by EDC advisors might best be focused on those areas which are not already receiving attention. It would seem that teachers should be included in an on-going assessment

of ways in which EDC advisor input can complement local resources.

While teachers expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their freedom to work independently within their classrooms, the question about teachers' influence in the school and in the Follow Through program evoked a varied response. This variation in response suggests a variation in teachers' aspirations for influence in this larger domain. For some teachers, being able to voice their opinions and having their input considered were satisfactory. Other teachers seemed to desire a fuller involvement in influencing school and program level decisions. Teachers who feel able to speak out about issues are seen to have the most powerful influence in this area.

4.4 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE:

Questions asked:

1. Which adults, other than EDC advisors and aides, do you work with (other teachers, principal, project director, resource people, specialists, other teachers, others)?

   What do you do with each of these people?

2. When you have a problem you can't seem to solve on your own, who do you turn to?

Burlington Follow Through teachers were asked the first question in an open-ended manner. Further probes were then made about specific categories of people. This question emphasized the other adults teachers might regularly work with in their day-to-day teaching activities. The second question concentrated on identifying the adults to whom teachers turn to for assistance when they (the teachers) have specific problems which they can't seem to solve on their own.

Eleven individual teachers mentioned from three to nine categories to the first question. One to three people were mentioned by ten teachers

in response to the second question. The responses to both questions are summarized in the Figure I below. Eleven teachers responded to the first question. At least three categories were mentioned by each teacher and some teachers mentioned as many as nine categories. Ten teachers responded to the second question. From one to three categories were mentioned. The responses to both questions are summarized in Figure I below:

Figure I

Responses to Questions 1 and 2: (1) "Which adults do you work with?" (other than your aide and EDC advisors); (2) "Who do you turn to when you have a problem you can't seem to solve on your own?" (Figure I.)

Categories mentioned:	Number of Mentions: Work with:	Number of Mentions: Turn to with a problem
Principal	8	6
Project Director*	6	3
Other teachers	8	6
Home-School Coordinator	8	3
Parent Coordinator	3	
Learning Center	6	1
Resource Center	3	
Reading Specialist	5	
Speech Therapist	3	
Physical Education Specialist	1	
Social Agencies (particularly Howard Mental Health Center	5	1
Friends		1
Family		1

*See page 30

In response to the first question, eight teachers mentioned working with the principal. Five of these teachers said they talked with the principal about discipline, one specifying that she found him very helpful with such problems and another saying that she talked with the principal when she felt that she couldn't manage a child. One teacher said that when she felt a child needed a morale boost, she took the child to the principal to show good work. Two teachers mentioned telling the principal their opinions about areas they are concerned about. One of these teachers mentioned that the principal occasionally called her in as a sounding board for something he was planning to do. One teacher just said she talked to the principal two or three times a year and another indicated that she's supposed to talk with her principal regularly, but finds that difficult because she feels he concentrates on telling her what's wrong while she feels in need of support.

The project director*was mentioned by six teachers as someone they worked with. The project director is a position created and funded by the Follow Through program. The project director was considered very helpful with practical things, especially to teachers new to the Follow Through program. It was mentioned that she could tell teachers such things as where to get materials, how to contact a resource person and how teachers fit into the school as a whole. She was seen as helpful by providing information, going along on trips, and coming into the classroom. One teacher noted her feeling that the project director is "willing to do anything we need that she can do."

The home-school coordinator was mentioned by eight teachers as someone they work with. This position was created by the public school system and is not funded by the Follow Through program. The home-school coordinator

*See page 30

was viewed as a warm and supportive person. One teacher, who indicated working with her quite frequently, felt this person seemed to have an answer for every problem the teacher couldn't solve herself. It was mentioned that the home-school coordinator and the parent coordinator (a position created by Follow Through) were people who know the children's family background and can better inform teachers and visit the h[illegible] and talk with a child's parents. Two teachers mentioned receiving diagnostic assistance about student placement and referrals for special testing from the home-school coordinator.

Eight teachers mentioned their work with other teachers. Two teachers specified working with other teachers during in-service days with the whole school and during staff meetings, sharing educational ideas and ways of record keeping. One of these teachers said she was so busy during the school day that these meetings gave her the chance to work with other teachers. Another teacher, new to the Follow Through program, felt that everyone had been helpful and had welcomed her as a teacher in the school.

Three teachers mentioned working particularly with other teachers on the same grade level and within the primary grades, commenting that "there's a carry over there" and teachers who have had the same children in another year can offer helpful information and perspective. Three teachers stressed their regular and informal work with other teachers, comparing notes on reading and organization of the day, commenting on each other's work, talking at lunchtime and sharing ideas and giving one another assurance. One teacher was considering combining her class at certain times of the day with that of a teacher who had complimentary skills. Two teachers noted having worked together to organize the summer workshop and set up in-service activities.

Six teachers mentioned working with the people in the Learning Center, finding them particularly helpful with individual children. They were seen as offering valuable resources and contributing significantly to the quality of learning in the school.

Five teachers who specified working with the reading specialist indicated that she had been helpful with screening children, with helping to set up effective programs and by working regularly with some individual children. When teachers said the reading specialist worked with children from their classes, the teachers indicated keeping in touch with what the children do at those times.

The speech therapist was mentioned by five teachers as someone who screens children, offers suggestions, and may work with individual children. The kindergarten teachers mentioned assisting the speech therapist by working with individual children during several afternoons.

One teacher specified that she worked with the physical education specialist on coordination related to reading.

Five teachers mentioned working with staff from the Howard Mental Health Center. Three of these teachers indicated that a staff member of this social agency made weekly visits to their classrooms and have done some perceptual testing of children and helped teachers to work with children who have problems. One teacher said a social worker met once a week with the teacher and a parent. This agency's staff was viewed as very supportive to teachers in their work with children and families.

In response to the second question, about who teachers turn to when they have a problem they can't seem to solve on their own, six categories of people (already mentioned as people teachers work with) were high-

lighted, and two new categories emerged. (See Figure 1.)

The principal and other teachers were the categories mentioned most frequently in response to this question. It was noted that the principal was responsible for "ultimate discipline" and made the final decision on such matters as suspension from school. Three of the six teachers who said they rely on other teachers in problem situations indicated that this was their most frequent source of help. One of these teachers commented that she would talk with another teacher who might be experiencing similar problems.

Three teachers mentioned that they would turn to the home-school coordination with such problems. One teacher, referring to the home-school coordinator as the "guidance counselor", said they work pretty closely together and that she will sometimes take a child to her if the child seems unable to function in the classroom. Another teacher found the home-school coordinator a "remarkable" person who will do what she can within the framework of the classroom. The teacher indicated that she felt very comfortable working with the home-school coordinator.

One teacher responded that she would turn to the social worker from the Howard Mental Health Center with social or behavior problems. Three teachers mentioned turning to the project director and one to the staff of the Learning Center for help with difficult problems.

The two new categories which emerged in response to this question were "friends" and "family." When dealing with a difficult problem, teachers seemed to seek help from people who they feel close to and whose judgment they trust.

One teacher added that she hasn't had too many problems and felt that

she's had a lot of regular help.

Questions asked:

3. Do you think you have enough influence over what happens in your classroom to be able to do what needs to be done?

   If no: Why not?

4. Do you think you have as much influence over your school and the Follow Through program as you would like to have?

   If no: Why not?
   Who does have influence?

All eleven Burlington Follow Through teachers responded to the third question. Seven teachers responded "yes", one commenting "I do just what I want to do (in my classroom)." Two teachers, new to the Follow Through program, said "I think so". One added she felt she would know more about this after she'd been there for awhile. Another teacher commented: "That's mostly why I like it here. I feel we have quite a bit of freedom ...the freedom to operate independently is really pretty high.

The fourth question addressed the matter of influence in the school and the Follow Through program and contained a double thrust: how much influence do teachers feel they have and how much influence would they like to have?

Seven teachers indicated general satisfaction with the opportunities available to them to have influence in their school and the Follow Through program. They said they were allowed to voice their opinions, and felt their input would be considered. One teacher said "we meet and discuss issues and have a vote." She felt this worked out best for the majority and she found this process acceptable. Another teacher felt that she could have more influence if she overcame her own shyness and said things

she felt needed to be said. In her opinion, the opportunities were there for everyone to have influence if they wanted to.

Four teachers offered more qualified response. One teacher gave examples of some important things teachers have done in organizing staff development, yet responded, "I don't know" to the question.

Another teacher said:

> I miss having a local advisor because the one we had was philosophically very much in tune with the way I felt and it was a great sense of comfort to know that he was in on all of the administrative level things and was able to plug in what I would have felt had I been there.

Another teacher indicated she had trouble contributing effectively at staff meetings. She added that it's most important to her to have freedom within her own classroom. The teacher in the school where there was only one Follow Through class expressed the view that Follow Through had been isolated in her school because of separate lunch and Follow Through meetings which take her away from the school faculty meetings. She would appreciate more contact with the Follow Through project director,* in support of her work as a teacher.

*See page 30

CHAPTER 5

OVERVIEW OF BURLINGTON ADMINISTRATOR ACTIVITIES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Administrators were asked to give an overview of activities related to their jobs. In particular, each administrator described his/her job in relation to other people or groups in the school. We asked the three Burlington administrators, two principals and one project director questions which were designed to give us an idea of what each administrator does day-to-day, how he or she defines his or her job, and how the work of EDC advisors relates to each job.

5.2 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The project director mentioned serving as a resource person for teachers, performing general administrative tasks, working with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), the community and the principals. She felt EDC had been particularly helpful at the beginning of her job. One principal stressed close association with teachers and the classrooms, and with the parent volunteer program in his school. He said he appreciated EDC for the input of new ideas. The other principal described his responsibilities in two categories: district-wide responsibilities involving other principals and the central office, and school responsibilities, involving work with parents, teachers,

children, and custodians. He said he also works closely with EDC to promote the EDC approach in the entire school.

5.3 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The principals tended to discuss their roles in relation to the district and their school, whereas the project director focused on Follow Through, EDC, and the one school where the Follow Through program is primarily located. However, all three Burlington administrators mentioned working with teachers and parents, although in different ways and with different degrees of specificity. All three also mentioned various routine tasks and responsibilities as part of their role but not as the most important aspects.

The project director made it clear that she worked closely with EDC advisors. The principals seemed to do less with EDC advisors, although both principals indicated strong agreement with the goals of EDC Follow Through.

5.4 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Questions asked

1. Would you describe the kinds of things you do as (role)?
2. Could you list the most important people and groups you work with and tell me what you usually do with them?
3. Of all the people you work with, which contribute the most to helping you carry out your job?

(Note: Since the answers to the three questions were interdependent and since the roles of the principals and the project director were quite different, responses are detailed for each position, rather than for each question.)

PROJECT DIRECTOR*

The project director began the discussion of her role by mentioning a two-page list which described her responsibilities. She did not specify how this list had been developed. She went on to summarize some aspects of her job. She felt she was a resource person for teachers, doing such things as looking up materials, suggesting ideas for the classroom and ways of getting different kinds of materials. She worked directly with the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), and the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). She had gotten the two groups to work together, and spent time talking with parents. The project director also described her work with community groups. She said she talked with them about the Follow Through program to increase awareness of what's happening at the school and to help parents feel more open about visiting the school. At the time of the interview, she was working on a gardening project to help Gardens For All, a community group, to set up city-wide gardens.

*See page 30

The project director said she worked with parents, principals, teachers, a speech therapist, and the Community Action Program (CAP). In working with parents, the project director said that she attended all PAC meetings and directed the parent workshops.

In the beginning when the position of project director was created, the division of administrative authority was unclear. However, with the help of EDC, she felt that her role had been more clearly defined and she and the principals have worked together. For example, on matters concerning proposals, requisitions, and new ideas for Follow Through, the principal usually has been involved in some way--signing forms, reviewing ideas, giving his verbal approval. On some things, the principal and project director have disagreed. But the project director felt issues of disagreement were open to discussion such as teacher performance, pupil placement, and requisitions.

The project director mentioned working in classrooms by teacher request with small groups of children, going on field trips with classes, and taking pictures for teachers. She mentioned helping the speech therapist set up a program with kindergarten teachers and arranging for the Community Action Project (CAP) to meet with the program's Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), to become better informed about Follow Through. Headstart teachers also have come to visit Follow Through, to coordinate information and ideas.

The project director mentioned the EDC advisors as being important in helping her to carry out her job. When she first started, EDC advisors gave her moral support and encouragement in helping her know what she should be doing. EDC advisors used to come more often in the beginning, she added, observing what she was doing and making recommendations.

PRINCIPALS

The EDC Follow Through Program is located in two Burlington schools. Since the principals of the two schools gave slightly different descriptions of their jobs, their descriptions are given separately.

One principal said he tried to be in and out of every classroom at least two times a week for short periods of time so that he can have first-hand knowledge on supply needs and problem situations, as well as being able to respond to teacher requests for observation. He said that 10 to 12 hours a week are left open for teachers to come in to discuss problems with him or to make plans. He also said that he talks with students about their personal problems and also with parents about students. About an hour-and-a-half a week of this principal's time is spent on the volunteer program: meeting with volunteers, talking with the coordinator about recruitment of volunteers, setting up programs, and training volunteers on a one-to-one basis. About three hours a week of the principal's time is

spent on administrative necessities, such as writing up reports and forms, making plans, and developing budgets. An hour or so is spent in planning for faculty meetings and some time is spent on the breakfast program and custodial supervision.

This principal said the most important group of people he works with in the school is teachers. He said that he meets with teachers in all kinds of ways: faculty meetings, curriculum groups which meet with the learning center teacher to talk about needs, to discuss selection of materials, at lunch meetings, and individual conferences. He also corresponds with teachers through a Friday Sheet which contains announcements of programs and meetings and discussions of programs and operations. He said that he devoted a good part of his time to questions like, "how do I teach it," "where do I find it," "how do I find out how to teach it," "how do I reach this particular child," and "how can I manage the room to make it better for teaching." Very little time, he added, is spent on the unruly child problem, primarily because there is a consulting program which advised teachers on discipline. He added, however, that the occurence of discipline problems at his school is less than at other schools where he has worked: "kids don't seem as bored as in other schools."

Individual parents were mentioned as important people with whom the principal works. Of the 280 families in his school, he estimated that about 140 parent volunteers work on a regular basis,

helping in the building and driving for field trips. He said individual parents ask a lot of questions about the school program, because they are involved; somtimes this is difficult, but he felt that their involvement is important.

This principal also mentioned spending time with children, other principals, assistant superintendents, superintendents, and buildings and grounds people.

This principal described his main responsibility as maintaining and operating the school. In this light, the classroom teachers are the biggest help because, "that's why a school functions." However, he felt that part of his job is to "change things." In this "changing" sense the important people are: the assistant superintendent of instruction, principals not in the district, EDC, and teachers. In particular, he mentioned that a summer course that had been recommended to him by an EDC advisor offered him the "largest load of fresh ideas in a long time: cross-age grouping, ungraded classrooms, humanistic education." He felt that these ideas would help more children learn to like to read and like themselves and school and not to be afraid to try new things. He also mentioned that teachers were an important part of change, because they must change themselves before other changes can be made.

The principal at the other Follow Through school mentioned that he had district-wide responsibilities which put him in contact with other principals and the central office, and school responsibilities

in which he interacted with parents, teachers, children, and custodians. In describing his work with the central administration he said that he often acts as a sounding board, responding to and suggesting curriculum issues and potential policies. In the school, he works with the Follow Through director. He said he was active in merging the EDC approach into the whole school, getting aides to be seen as more than "aides" and getting the EDC approach seen as more than tri-wall. He added that the Follow Through director has been more than cooperative in sharing materials and experiences with the whole school.

In talking about his work with teachers, the principal began by saying that he doesn't work with teachers directly as much as he'd like to.

He elaborated more on his work with parents. He said that he tried to welcome parents to the school with messages encouraging them to come to Follow Through activities. He mentioned that there were activities for parents to get involved in, like Wednesday night volleyball and joint PAC-PTO meetings.

Finally, he added that he is not one to sit in his office. "I'm in the building, in the classrooms, in the halls...there's a lot of touch between the kids and myself...I support the teachers in the school. Ask any teacher."

One of the people who is most helpful and most effective in the school, according to this principal, is a member of the school support staff. In closing, he added that "In this school, everybody helps carry out responsibilities."

CHAPTER 6

THE ISSUE OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT AS SEEN BY BURLINGTON TEACHERS, AIDES AND ADMINISTRATORS, AND PARENTS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

All Follow Through personnel were asked whether they thought parents should be involved in their children's school. It was expected that they would answer, "yes," since increasing parent involvement is one of the major goals of the national Follow Through program and of EDC as a Follow Through sponsor, and since it is hard to argue that parents should not be involved in their children's school. Therefore, the follow-up question, "In what ways?", was expected to elicit the most interesting responses. Parents were asked a number of questions about their own involvement in their child's school. The purpose of this chapter is to report and compare the attitudes and opinions which people in the Follow Through program expressed concerning parent involvement. We have identified 1) the ways in which parent involvement is defined, 2) the nature of agreement and disagreement about those definitions, and 3) some issues raised by the people interviewed which would merit further discussion to clarify the program's overall approach to parent involvement.

Teachers, aides, and administrators were asked the following

question: "Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school? In what ways?" The fourteen parents interviewed were asked a series of questions relevant to this issue. The questions probed both attitudes and reported behavior. Only parents whose children attend the Wheeler School were interviewed.

6.2 OVERALL SUMMARY OF TEACHER, AIDE, ADMINISTRATOR AND PARENT RESPONSE

Everyone interviewed agreed that parents should be involved in their children's school. There was also general agreement on the form such involvement might take: visiting or helping in class or on field trips, attending parent activities, and communicating with school personnel. However, differences existed among those interviewed concerning which forms of involvement were most desirable and why parent involvement is important.

6.3 OVERALL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE, ADMINISTRATOR AND PARENT RESPONSE

A clear conclusion from the interview responses is that more communication among the people interviewed would help to clarify the implementation of parent involvement. Everyone agrees that parent involvement is beneficial, but, for example, some teachers would like one kind of involvement and some prefer another. It would seem to be necessary for teachers to let parents know how they would like them to be involved and for parents to make their wishes known too, so that the school can develop ways of making such

involvement possible. It may be helpful to match teachers who want help in the classroom with parents able and willing to give such help. It may also be helpful for parents to have opportunities to receive some training that would assist them in becoming more effective participants.

6.4 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Teachers were unanimous in their positive responses to the question of whether parents should be involved in the school. They specified several different ways that parents should be involved, including conferences and other forms of communication with the teacher, participation in special activities for parents, and visiting or helping with the class. Some teachers also expressed reservations or preferences about parent involvement which reveal some important differences among teachers concerning the ways in which they would like to have parents involved.

6.5 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Some teachers wanted parents to visit and help in the classroom while others just preferred that parents visit. Differences such as this suggest that the role of parents in the classroom would merit further discussion and clarification among Follow Through personnel and with parents. Such discussion might assist parents in their understanding of each teacher's expectations about what kinds of things parents are welcome to do in the classroom,

and, conversely, such discussion could provide a way for teachers to learn about parents' expectations and wishes. Another possibility for consideration in these discussions might be setting up some kind of orientation or training program for parents who would like to help with instruction. Such discussions could be informed by some of the material in our report on interviews with parents, which indicates that the Follow Through Program in Burlington has contributed to making the school a place where parents feel welcome and comfortable.

6.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school? If so, in what ways?

All eleven teachers agreed that parents should be involved in their children's school. As one teacher put it, "That's a hard thing to say no to."

Teachers had different reasons for approving of parent involvement. One said, "I think parents should be involved and know and care what their children are doing in school." Two other teachers talked about information parents could get by being involved and added that teachers could also learn from parents. One teacher tied parent involvement directly to children's learning by saying,

> "When children know that their parents are interested in what they're doing in school...it automatically makes the child feel good because he knows the parent is interested in him."

Our interest was primarily in the follow-up question: "In what ways should parents be involved?" The ways teachers said that parents should be involved in their children's school included: conferences and communication; participating in special events for parents at the school; visits to the classroom; helping with field trips and helping with instruction.

Total Responses: "In what ways should parents be involved"

Category of Involvement	Favorable Mentions
Conferences & Communication	5
Special events for parents	4
Visits to the classroom	3
Helping with field trips	3
Helping with instruction	5

Various teachers commented about parent-teacher conferences and parent activities as ways to be involved.

Special activities for parents in the school were considered important. One teacher stressed that it is important for parents to view the school as an accepting place, one where they can feel comfortable. She said that she had learned that many adults find school a frightening place and that, "I'm always so surprised that people are really afraid to come to see me." She and other teachers said that things like having a coffee pot going all day and having activities like volleyball games, crafts, and pot-luck suppers made the school more open to parents and gave them a chance to get together and talk about what was happening, with each other and with school staff.

One teacher commented that she appreciated it when parents let her know what they are thinking and would like to develop ways to improve understanding and constructive communication between parents and staff.

Teachers who mentioned visits to the classroom and helping with field trips as ways they felt parents should be involved did not go into detail; neither did those teachers who mentioned favorably the category of "helping with instruction." The fullest responses were given by teachers who expressed reservations about having parents help with instruction. All of the teachers expressing

reservations definitely favored parent involvement, but their statements about potential and actual difficulties resulting from parents helping with instruction are informative and we have included them at some length. This may give greater weight to teachers' feelings about problems with parent involvement than is merited by the overall responses to this question. Readers should bear in mind that all eleven teachers felt parents should be involved in their children's school. Furthermore, five teachers mentioned favorably "helping with instruction" as a way parents should be involved. The comments of the five teachers who expressed reservations about this type of involvement are reported in detail because they reveal what seems to be some important issues. Two of those teachers who said they wanted parents to visit and observe the classroom said specifically that they did not want parents to help with instruction. Two other teachers also made it clear that they did not want to have parents working in the classroom.

One teacher, who said she felt that parents should be involved "in every possible way," also defined some

limits for parent involvement. She made it clear that she felt teachers should retain control over the academic program of the class. Another teacher said that she had once taught in a parent-run school. She said that the parents there had felt free to come into her class and do anything at all -- and that this was very disruptive. This teacher was certain that parent involvement should not go that far. She said that parents were welcome to help out as long as they had something specific to contribute and could fit into the structure set up by the teacher.

Another teacher who felt that parents should be involved in the classroom implied some reservations.

> Last year I had super-involved parents; it was almost exhausting. I had twelve people each week on different days come in and help. And to instruct them in what I had in mind-- and they wanted me to tell them; they didn't want me to just say to do something you'd like -- that was exhausting. And I got myself all tangled up in just being able to think straight.

Another complication inherent in parents working in the classroom was described by two teachers. One said, "The children think of their parent as someone they do certain things for." She also said it was confusing for children to have too many different adults around when

"this one lets them do a thing this way, and this one lets them do something else." Because of the potential for confusing the child, she said that she preferred not to have parents working in the classroom. She added that children should be able to do things on their own in the school that they could take home and share with their parents. The other teacher spoke about value conflicts between parents and teachers. She said that conferences were important so that teachers could learn about parents' values and help parents to see what the teacher is trying to accomplish. She said that every year she encountered some parents whose beliefs about what children should be learning were so very different from her own.

6.7 SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

All the Follow Through aides thought parents should be involved in their children's school. They mentioned visiting and helping in classrooms, helping with field trips, attending parent activities, and communicating with the teacher and aide as ways for parents to be involved. They also recognized some limits for parents on how involved they could be, such as time limitations and personal needs and interests.

6.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

The question about parent involvement provided rich information,

because five of the aides are also parents of children in Follow Through. The combination of a desire for more parent involvement and the recognition of problems in utilizing parents productively when they do want to become involved suggests that it might be fruitful to discuss the general question of how parents can best be involved in the school, keeping in mind the limitations on what parents want to do and are able to do and the limitations on the amount of time teachers can devote to working with parents. Another interesting point in these responses is that the reasons aides gave for why parents should be involved in their children's school focused on helping the children. This is certainly a good and sufficient reason for parents to be involved. However, it should be noted that our interviews with parents suggest that some parents find involvement in the school personally rewarding to themselves as well as helpful to their children.

6.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school? If so, in what ways?

All eleven aides agreed that parents should be involved in the school. Specifying ways in which parents can be involved in the school, aides talked about parents either visiting in the classroom (6), helping with instruction (4), or helping with field trips (4). A total of nine aides mentioned one or more of these possibilities.

Aides also talked about communication between parents and teachers (6) and about participation in school activities for parents (6).

Responses to Question: "In what ways should parents be involved in their children's school?"

Category of Involvement	Favorable Mentions
Visits to classroom	6
Helping in classroom	4
Helping with field trips	4
Communications	6
Parent activities	6

An essential part of visiting and helping in the classroom was described as parents observing their children in school. Some of the favorable mentions we counted as "visits" may have been intended to include "helping" but did not mention helping explicitly. One aide related an incident concerning parent help with a field trip. A bus had been ordered for the trip but failed to appear, so parents were called and five quickly arrived with cars to take the children, and the parents proved to be very helpful at the destination as well.

Six aides mentioned the importance of communication between parents and teachers as a form of parent involvement. One aide explained that the teacher she works with invites parents to come talk with her and spends a great deal of time telling them what their children will be doing and explaining procedures. This aide said she

thought parents appreciated knowing so much about what is happening.

Another aide used her experience as a parent to illustrate the importance of talking with the teacher. She said she had been surprised to learn that one of her children had not been doing well in school. When she returned from the conference she talked with her child about trying harder. With her encouragement the child did so and developed some important skills.

Parent activities, such as suppers, volleyball games, workshops for parents, and parent-teacher meetings were mentioned by six aides as important forms of involvement. One aide said there had been a special supper just for the parents in her classroom that had been very successful with almost all parents attending. The feeling seemed to be that events such as these allow parents to get to know teachers and aides and enables them to communicate more freely.

Nine aides volunteered various reasons why parent involvement is important. Three themes were expressed. One was that it is important for parents to show their interest in what the child is doing. Another was that parents need to know what their children are doing in school. This was stated very strongly by one aide. She said she always ended up saying the same thing to parents: "Get in your school and find out," and that this was the only way for parents to understand what is happening. The third theme was that by visiting the school parents can learn what they need to know to help their children. One aide said, "If you can get parents to

think it's a great thing...and praise the child for doing good work...it certainly gives a lot more positive reinforcement." Another stressed the need for consistency on discipline between the home and the school, saying that it is really hard to carry out discipline in school without support from parents.

Some problems with parental involvement were also mentioned. One problem is simply the amount of time that parents have to give to school business. An aide pointed out that some parents have personal problems and that they appreciate being able to turn a child over to the school. Another aide worried about the danger of parents becoming too involved for the child's own good: "I think it's helpful...except perhaps in some cases where parents are over-zealous and maybe push a kid beyond their ability and I think that can be...awful for the kid." One aide echoed the feeling expressed to us by the teacher she works with that too many parents get involved by complaining.

6.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

All three administrators agreed strongly that parents should be involved. They were primarily concerned with the kind of help parents could provide in the classroom and with making it possible for parents to understand the school and the Follow Through program.

6.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The strength of the three administrators' opinions that parents

ought to be in the school as much as possible suggests that there is indeed agreement among administrators about the desirability of involving parents.

The two principals expressed the concern that the parents learn more about the nature of the program, so that they are better able to understand and support it. It may be that the project director's major concern, that the parents feel free to come into the school, is a pre-condition for parent involvement.

6.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school? If so, in what ways?

When asked if they thought parents should be involved in their children's school, all three administrators said, "yes," with enthusiasm. All three thought the following two things were important: (a) parents being in the school and helping in the classroom; and (b) parents understanding what is happening in the school. The project director said that teachers should take the initiative in contacting parents, by home visits or coffee hours, and let them know what is happening in the classroom. Then, they should try to get parents to help. Parents could help by supporting the teacher and helping the child with things sent home by the teacher. She said that children

feel good when they know their parents are interested in what they bring home from school or if their parents come on a field trip or to help in the classroom. She also said that meetings and other parent activities are good: "Just for parents to feel that they can come in to school -- that can open up the classroom."

Both of the principals stressed the importance of educating the parents so that they will know better how to help out at home and appreciate more what the school and the Follow Through Program are doing. One principal, who listed a number of ways he felt that parents should be involved, said that he wished some of the parent workshops could have "more guts." He preferred that more of the workshops be academic and informative about the EDC approach to education. The other principal noted that getting parents to work with the school increases the amount of interaction among people from the different neighborhoods served by the school. The same principal saw reduction of parents' fears about schools and involvement of the community in decision-making as important goals.

6.13 SUMMARY OF PARENT RESPONSE

Many of the questions asked of parents had to do with their involvement in their child's school. Parents were asked questions about what they do in the school, what they would like to do and why they feel as they do about parent involvement. In general, there

was agreement that parents should be involved. About half of the parents interviewed described themselves as being active in the school as visitors or volunteers or by attending parent activities. Nearly all said they had some communication with school personnel about their children. (Note: Parent comments were recorded in writing by parent-interviewers. Quotation marks set off statements as recorded by the interviewers.)

6.14 ANALYSIS OF PARENT RESPONSE

Some of the barriers to parent involvement described by aides were confirmed by parents who said they didn't have time to be involved or who said they would need child care. However, it does not seem that there are problems with parents not knowing about activities or wanting other kinds of activities.

It is interesting to note that most parents who were interviewed thought they could help their children by becoming involved in the school and several thought such involvement was a good thing for themselves. This kind of motivation deserves further exploration by those planning ways for parents to be involved in the school. As a result, parents might be able to derive more personal benefits from their relationship with the school. This would seem to be an important aspect of parent involvement.

6.15 DETAIL OF PARENT RESPONSE

From the questionnaire (see appendix) given to fourteen

Burlington parents, the following questions seem relevant to parent involvement.

A. VISITING OR HELPING IN THE CLASSROOM

1. Have you ever visited your child's school?

14 yes
0 no

Have you visited there once, a few times, or often?

1 once
5 a few times
8 often

Once: Not recently. Had a chat with teacher last year.
A few times: "Only if I have to, I used to go often." -- At least twice a year.
Often: "I'm there almost every day for different reasons." --Last year mostly. At open houses and meetings with teachers.

2. Have you ever helped as a volunteer at school?

7 yes
7 no

The 7 parents who indicated that they have not volunteered at school were asked:

Would you like to volunteer at school?

4 yes
2 no
1 no response

(If yes) what would help you to do this? (Probe for things like child care, being asked by teacher, etc.)

Responses included:
--Not active because of my health.
--Can't because I have to be at home to answer telephone for husband's business.

--Can't because I work all day.
--Time.

All four parents who said they would like to volunteer also said they are unable to volunteer.

(If yes, you have volunteered):

a. How often would you say you have helped: once, a few times, or often?

once
1 a few times
5 often

b. Did the teacher, or someone else, ask for your help, or did you offer your help?

6 parents offered (teacher asks sometimes).
1 someone asked ("teacher asked for mothers to come in and help")

c. What did you do as a volunteer?

Responses to this question can be divided into two main categories: activities related to the classroom and parent activities.

Activities related to the classroom:

4 parents mentioned helping with class trips
2 parents mentioned helping with parties

Other things mentioned included:
--Show children how to cook.
--Arts and crafts.
--Helped in classroom.
--Sometimes took aide's place and I used to go in one day a week to help with children.
--Whatever else I'm needed for.

Parent activities:

--Auction
--Bingo
--PAC Board
--Projects to earn money for the school.
--"I taught nutrition and education workshops" (to parents).

3 of the parents who volunteered mentioned volunteering in both classroom and parent activities.
3 mentioned only classroom related activities.
1 mentioned only parent activities.

d. Was volunteering at school a good experience for you?

7 yes
0 no

All seven parents who had volunteered at school said it was a good experience for them.

The following reasons were given:

--I've gotten to meet a lot of people. I feel if I'm interested in school, the child will have a better interest in school.
--I enjoy it and have done this type of thing for a long time, even for older children not in Follow Through.
--Like to work with children. Children enjoy it.
--Learn more about school program.
--Learn a lot about people and children.
--I needed the experience working with groups.
--At the time, I enjoyed it.

e. Do you plan to do this kind of thing again?

6 yes

One said: If I'm ever asked to help with anything.
Three said: Enjoy doing it; worthwhile experience.
One said: So I can know what's happening to my children.
One said: I'm homeroom mother for Follow Through child's class.

1 no (Does not plan to volunteer again)

"Unless it is to work as an aide."
This parent made it clear that she would like to work as a paid aide, but does not intend to volunteer any more.

B. PARENT ACTIVITIES

1. Have you ever attended a meeting of the PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization)?

8 yes
6 no

Of those responding yes, one parent added that they were joint meetings (of PTA and PAC) and another said "last year."

Have you attended a meeting of PTO once, a few times, or often?

2 once
1 a few times
4 often

2. Have you ever attended ameeting of the PAC (Policy Advisory Committee)?

7 yes
7 no

a. Have you attended a PAC meeting once, a few times, or often?

2 once
a few times
6 often

Three parents who said they often attended PAC meetings also said that they are or were members of PAC. One had been a chairperson for two years.

b. Have you ever taken part in an activity or talked with an EDC Follow Through advisor?

6 yes
6 no
2 no response

One parent explained her contact with an EDC advisor had been at a workshop. Another mentioned she had been on the board of PAC last year.

c. Do you know what EDC advisors do?

6 yes
6 no
2 no response

Although an explanation of the above question was not requested, one parent offered the response: "They help if you have any problems."

(The next two questions were responded to by the 8 parents who indicated that they have attended parent meetings.)

3. What are some of the reasons you go to parent meetings?

5 responses focused on going to parent meetings to find out more about what is going on at school.

Included as reasons were:

--to take part in planning activities.
--I wanted to find out how my children were doing.
--My kids have a lot of complaints about the teachers, so I go to complain a little bit.

4. Have you participated in any other Follow Through parent activities (other than meetings) such as: the garden project, parent workshops and suppers?

8 yes
0 no

Other parent activities mentioned were:

6 mentioned suppers
5 mentioned workshops (one specified Christmas workshop)
1 mentioned volleyball
1 mentioned Garden Project

All 8 parents who indicated that they go to parent meetings also indicated taking part in other Follow Through parent activities.

Would you like to participate in other activities?

5 out of this group of 8 parents indicated interest in "other" activities, but did not specify particular activities.

2 parent said that health problems limited their participation.

1 parent said: "If I have time."

1 parent said: "Depending on what they were and if it was something I was interested in."

(The next two questions were responded to by the 6 parents who had indicated they had not attended parent meetings.

Did you know that there are parent meetings?

4 yes
0 no
2 no response

Would you like to attend parent meetings?

2 yes
3 no
1 no response

5. Have you participated in any Follow Through parent activities (other than meetings) such as, the garden project, parent workshops, and suppers?

1 yes (suppers)
4 no
1 no response

One parent who had not participated in either meetings or other activities commented: "I'm not very social."

Would you like to participate in other activities?

2 yes

One parent who said yes, indicated she would bring things to various activities, such as baked goods, but finds it impossible to attend.

3 no
1 no response

6. How do you hear about parent activities?

0 haven't heard
11 notices
4 telephone calls
6 newsletter
0 talking with other parents
1 other (specify)--"and from kids"

No one indicated that they haven't heard about parent activities. Notices seemed to be the way most parents heard about such activities.

7. How is it best to notify you about activities for parents?

6 notices
5 newsletter
2 telephone call
1 "Same way as they have been: paper from school."

Several comments were offered about notices:

--Children bring them home chucked in their pockets, but I prefer this.
--The kids always bring home the notices.
--They should mail notices because sometimes children don't get them home at all.

8. Do you have any difficulties in arranging to come to parent activities?

6 yes
7 no
1 no response

One parent just said "time" was a difficulty.
Five parents mentioned child care as a difficulty in arranging to come.

Some comments on child care were:

--Can't get babysitter.
--I have trouble getting child care on weekdays because of school. Parents don't like letting children sit then.

9. Are there activities which you would like to see available for parents that have not been mentioned?

2 yes
12 no

The two activities suggested were: a class in modern math and a basketball game.

Both parents indicated that they would be willing to help make these activities possible.

C. COMMUNICATION

1. Can you tell me the ways you learn about how (Follow Through child) is doing in school?

12 talk with teacher
2 talk with others at school
6 talk with child (specified: she tells me)
6 watch child (1 specified observing in the classroom.)
0 don't know
2 other (--learns when child brings home papers;
--learns at meetings)

The following questions (2 and 3) were asked of the parents who said they talked with the teacher:

2. Would you say you have talked with 's (Follow Through child) teacher:

2 once
4 a few times
4 often
3 parents indicated that they have "not yet" talked with the teacher this year. One said that her child had a "new teacher"; another mother explained she had a new baby to care for.
1 parent indicated that she had talked with the teacher "but not about school work."

3. Does the teacher ask for a meeting or do you ask to talk with the teacher?

5 teacher asks
3 parents ask
3 both

--Got note from teacher to make an appointment anytime I wanted to.

Specific occasions for talking with teacher included:

--I go to open house at night.
--Coffee hour to talk with teacher.
--Teacher sent home note to set up meeting.

D. HOW PARENTS VIEW THEIR ROLE IN THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

1. Do you feel that your involvement in the school can help your child's education?

10 yes
2 no
1 both
1 no response

The 10 parents who responded that they do feel their involvement (in the school) can help their child's education, included three interpretations of "help":

6 parents responded that the child feels good when parent is involved in school

--Makes child feel good when someone is interested.
--When you help at school child appreciates it.
--The kids feel important if the parents participate.
--If they know you care they will probably try harder, but if they feel you don't care then they don't either.

3 parents responded that a sense of partnership between parent and child, and parent and teacher helps child

--By being involved, I know what my child is doing. Then I can help her.
--He knows I'm there and interested in his school and his problems and the teacher and I will help him together.

1 parent responded that parent's active role can help to change things

--By making suggestions for better things and trying to change things that aren't right.

Of the two parents who do not feel that their involvement (in the school) can help their child's education, one stated: "I do what I can at home."

The other clearly stated that she felt: "It's the teacher's duty to teach them, not me. What do parents know about teaching children, actually."

One parent responded yes and no -- "Involving myself with my child's school work will help her, but joining school organizations has little to do with her education."

It would seem that most parents who were interviewed see a strong connection between their involvement at school and their child's education.

2. Do you see any benefits for you, personally, in being active in the school?

8 yes
5 no
1 no response

The 8 parents who said they do see benefits for themselves, personally, in being active in the school, said that they:

--Like meeting people (teachers and other parents).
--Like helping children.
--Find satisfaction in knowing what is going on.
--Enjoy another interest besides their work.
--Like learning new things.

Their comments included:

--(It) gives me a chance to be with other people who have children in the school.
--Contact with other parents.
--Contact with teachers on a social basis.
--I learned new things and helping children makes me feel better.
--I enjoy being around children...better than staying home alone all day.

3. Do you think you might be more active:

if you know more about school activities?

3 yes
10 no
1 no response

if child care were provided?

3 yes
8 no
1 possibly

if other kinds of activities were possible?

1 yes
II no
1 no response

These responses suggest several possible ways to increase parent activity in the school:

--Increase information available on ways in which parents might be "active" in the school (see V.6 on how it's best to notify parents about activities in which they are welcome to participate.)
--Explore possibilities for expanding the availability of child care, for evening meetings as well as during the day.

Creating "other activities" does not seem of much interest to this group of responding parents.

CHAPTER 7

VIEWS ON CHILDREN'S LEARNING: BURLINGTON TEACHERS, AIDES, ADMINISTRATORS, AND PARENTS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Teachers, aides, administrators and parents were asked questions designed to determine 1) what they thought were the most important goals for children in school, 2) which areas were being satisfactorily dealt with in the school and 3) which areas needed improvement.

Our purpose in asking about goals for children's learning was to learn about differences and similarities in the opinions of people in these groups and to compare their statements on goals for children's learning with those made by EDC Follow Through. The questions about which goals were being met and which areas needed improvement were included to identify areas for attention by EDC advisors.

7.2 and 7.3 OVERALL SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE, ADMINISTRATOR AND PARENT RESPONSE

In listening to the responses of these four groups in Burlington, we distinguished statements related to the learning of basic skills, particularly reading and math, from statements related to learning of social attitudes and behavior, such as self-reliance and respect for others. A major area of agreement

among people in all four groups is that both types of learning are important. The most striking differences can be seen as differences in emphasis or interpretation concerning these two types of learning.

Social attitudes and behavior were related to emotional growth and maturity by teachers. They stressed the need to help children become more self-reliant, more respectful of others, and more responsible for taking care of themselves. The aides also saw this type of learning as important, and talked of it as a necessary pre-condition for academic learning. Some aides were also concerned with discipline problems. Since many of the aides are parents of Follow Through children, it is not surprising that this concern was also found among the parents interviewed. In contrast to the concern for discipline expressed by parents and aides, the administrators said little about discipline.

The differences in emphasis for children's learning suggest that further exploration among groups might be worthwhile. The need for sharing points of view seems clear because the differences in perspective could create misunderstandings about what children should be learning. Clarification of common goals could support cooperative efforts among groups in implementing the Follow Through program.

7.4 and 7.5 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Burlington teachers gave special emphasis fo the following goals, which also appear in the EDC goals for children listed in the 1974-75 Proposal for Continuation of the EDC Open Education Follow Through Program, Part One, (pp. 20-21):

-- Children taking responsibility for their own learning--showing initiative, self-reliance, self-motivation.

-- Children expressing themselves freely and intelligibly through spoken language.

-- Emotional development -- a sense of self-worth and trust.

-- Social responsibility and respect for others.

The teachers' equal emphasis on both social and academic development is consistent with the goals of the EDC Follow Through program. One of the main tenets of EDC Follow Through is that both the cognitive and the affective domains are important and deserve thoughtful attention by teachers. It is not possible to say from the data available whether the teachers we interviewed held this belief before they became involved in Follow Through or whether it is a consequence of their involvement. Neither is it possible from this data to compare this group of teachers with teachers outside of Follow Through. However, it seems significant that there is agreement on this point between the teachers and the sponsor.

There are some differences between the goals stated by the teachers and those set out by EDC. The list of EDC goals for children places greater emphasis on children's self-expression and creativity. The Follow Through teachers, on the other hand, said more about widening children's horizons and placed more emphasis on the importance of reading.

The fact that all teachers expressed satisfaction with some of their goals may be considered an indicator of a fairly high level of satisfaction.

7.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Question asked:

1. What are the most important goals you are trying to accomplish in your teaching?

All eleven teachers responded by mentioning goals for children's learning. Six also talked about their goals for the development of their own teaching styles.

Goals related to children's learning can be placed into four categories: (a) helping children become more independent; (b) getting children to like and accept themselves; (c) helping children to be able to work well together; and (d) academics. The table shows how many teachers mentioned and how many emphasized each category.

Responses to Question 1. "Goals for Teaching" having to do with children's learning

Category	Mentions	Emphasis
(a) Become independent	6	6
(b) Like selves	7	5
(c) Work together	2	2
(d) Academics	7	3

All eleven teachers mentioned either helping children become more independent or getting children to like and accept themselves. Nine put special emphasis on one, the other, or both. Some teachers did not distinguish between the two categories, as the following quotation indicates:

> I think academic things are important, but I think how children feel about themselves and how they view themselves in relationship to the world and to learning, to being responsible kinds of people and to feeling that they have accomplishments, whatever they may be ... are terribly important. I think if people view themselves positively, the other kinds of learning follow ... and if they don't feel good about themselves they don't do well no matter how much you cram down their throats.

Two of the six teachers who talked about goals related to their own teaching style referred to moving from being "structured" to becoming more individualized in their teaching. One teacher said, "I feel very committed to the fact that when all the money goes and when we don't have aides, that the kinds of ways one...the kinds of things that I said are important with children still can happen."

She went on to say that some people think the way teachers work with children in Follow Through can only be done with the aides and the extra materials, but that she feels sure it can happen even with only one teacher. Other teachers, in discussing goals for their own development as teachers, spoke of becoming more in tune with what children need, getting better organized, becoming more confident, and improving ways of extending and connecting children's learning.

Question asked:

2. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for children to be doing and learning during the early grades.

One teacher who had said, "My main goal is to help every child feel successful," in response to Question 1. about teaching goals, stressed academic matters in response to Question 2. about the things that it is important for children to be doing and learning. When asked if there was a contradiction there, she replied:

> I don't see how you can like yourself if you can't read and write when you're seven years old or eight years old. I know some of them feel kind of dumb about themselves. And when they do learn some new word or something, they're excited about it.

Responses to Question 2. "Important things for children to be doing and learning."

Category	Mentions
Learning basic skills	11
Learning attitudes or behaviors	8
Being exposed to new things	4

Just as all eleven teachers mentioned children gaining independence and liking themselves as important goals for their teaching, all teachers interviewed said something about "basic skills" as being important for children to learn. Several of the teachers explained the need to learn skills for broader purposes, for example, in order to do other things, or as a part of life. Three teachers stressed that this learning should be at the learner's own pace.

Along with basic skills, eight teachers included the importance of children learning certain attitudes or modes of behavior. The behaviors varied widely, from developing good learning habits to becoming more aware of their bodies and manipulating materials with their hands. Six of these teachers said something about children learning to work together and becoming more responsible for themselves. Four teachers said that it was important for children to be exposed to new things, especially to things they might not have the chance to do or learn about at home. Field trips were mentioned in this regard, along with activities like

cooking and sewing. One teacher included tasting unusual food at lunch in this category.

Questions asked:

3. Which of the things you think children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?

4. Which of those things would be most likely to improve in your classroom?

All teachers expressed satisfaction with at least some of their goals. A teacher who stressed independence said the children in her class were becoming more self-reliant. Two teachers who said they wanted to expose children to new things to stimulate their thinking, expressed satisfaction with the opportunities for exploration and expression through manipulative materials in their classrooms. Two teachers who said it was most important for children to get good math and reading skills said the children were progressing "step-by-step," moving closer to their expected grade levels. A teacher who talked about children learning to work together said they were doing better at this, that there was less need for adult supervision, and there were fewer fights, particularly when the children were involved in self-chosen activities.

One teacher did not respond to the question about improvements. Another said she could not think of anything. A third had described, in detail, substantial changes that had recently been made in the organization of her classroom, changes designed to make it more orderly and to contribute to the children's academic progress. One

teacher responded in terms of improving her own abilities to organize the room, to hear and respond to kids better, and to help children extend an interest into learning a variety of things. Another said she wanted children to be better able to use reading, writing, books and materials to answer questions on their own. The remaining six teachers were equally divided between those emphasizing learning things in addition to basic skills and emphasizing social interaction. One of the three teachers who said they wanted children to be learning additional kinds of things, said she felt weak in science and wanted to do more with it. The other two both said they needed to set up other "areas," spaces within the classroom for specific activities. One talked about science and social studies areas, the other about dramatics, plants, and a quiet corner. The three who talked about social interaction mentioned the need for more cooperation among children. One said that social growth was beginning to occur but going slowly. Another, who had emphasized academic goals and satisfaction with progress on academics, just said that progress was not as good in the social realm.

7.7 and 7.8 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

Burlington aides stressed the learning of basic skills (with several specific mentions of reading) and learning of social attitudes and behavior. There were several mentions of the importance of structure and/or discipline. All aides said they were satisfied

with at least one of the goals they considered most important in the classroom. Aides held different views of which areas needed improvement. Categories mentioned included social growth and basic skills and, more specifically, recognition and diagnosis of learning disabilities, discipline, and improvement of aides' own abilities in various areas. In general, the aides displayed marked insight into the problems children have in the classroom and sympathy with their needs.

The aides' combination of academic and social learning goals for children is in agreement with the goals of EDC and of the teachers. One element contributed by aides that teachers did not talk about was the idea of social learning as a precondition for academic learning. Aides stressed the need for children to learn to get along with others before academic learning can take place. It seems useful to ask what implications this difference between teachers' and aides' emphasis might have for the program. One ramification might be more EDC advisor attention to aides, regarding their concerns about children's behavior and social learning.

It seems significant that so many of the aides spoke as parents of Follow Through children. The fact that their attitudes seemed congruent with those of the teachers and with EDC's goals is encouraging for the involvement of parents in Follow Through classrooms. Aides, who are also parents, have found satisfying roles in Follow Through and support the goals of the program. Although

this is undoubtedly easier for aides to do as they work regularly in the classroom it suggests that parent volunteers could also work well in Follow Through classrooms.

7.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is most important for children to be doing and learning in school in the early grades?

When asked what was most important for children in the early grades to be doing and learning, ten of the eleven aides answered in terms of both basic skills and social attitudes or behavior. Three stressed basic skills first and then mentioned social learning. The other seven aides reversed the order, talking about things like learning to get along with the other children first and then saying that basic skills were important. The eleventh aide stressed basic skills and the ways they can be learned.

Three aides implied there are certain pre-conditions for learning basic skills. One said, "I think they have to settle down before they can learn anything," explaining that this meant being able to sit and listen. Another aide believed children had to have good feelings about themselves. She said that many children come to school feeling that they're bad and that this feeling has to be changed before they can learn. They need to have positive experiences that help them to like themselves. According to this aide, the next step is relating with other children in the classroom.

After these two pre-conditions are met, she said, the children can "merge into learning situations in the classroom."

The third aide who mentioned pre-conditions for learning made a point of the special role that aides can play. She said:

> I think a child has to be comfortable with a teacher and with an aide. I think with an aide, a child is comfortable because in the back of his little mind he knows that the aides are mothers, and that means a lot to them.

She said most of the aides are known in the neighborhood, which often makes children more confortable with them than with a new teacher.

The kinds of things aides mentioned under the category "learning social attitudes and behaviors" included getting along with other children, learning to share, learning consideration, and learning to take responsibility for things like cleaning up. Sharing was seen as one of the hardest parts of getting along with others. One aide said, "A lot of them don't share...they hate sharing...maybe it's because a lot of them don't have things at home," and added that they need to learn to share the attention of adults too. Another aide put the same kind of learning in terms of "respect," not hurting others, realizing that they can't do certain things at certain times.

The basic skills aides said children should be learning included reading, writing, arithmetic, science, and recognition of colors and shapes. Reading, mentioned explicitly by eight aides, was the specific skill most frequently mentioned. Two aides stressed discipline and structure as necessary for children to learn basic skills. One aide said that

children require at least a "semi-structured" class, in which they know they have to sit down and do reading and other work, in order to insure that they learn the basic skills. The other aide spelled out her concept of "structure". She said that children need some pressure to learn things, they they should have some drill, especially on numbers, even if it isn't fun, adding "I don't think we should always feel guilty if learning isn't fun."

One aide's comments illustrate the predominant aides' view stressing both social attitudes and behavior and basic skills as critical. She strongly stated that the first thing she was concerned about was that children learn to respect each other; then it's important for them to read, write and do arithmetic. She went on to talk about a boy in her class who couldn't read, saying that she felt he had the ability to learn, but somehow hadn't been helped enough in reading with the result that he now lacked confidence in his ability to learn to read.

Two other aides stressed the importance of reading and expressed some doubts about the success of Follow Through in teaching reading. They thought the program was a little too open with regard to reading and that some children failed to learn to read as a result.

Questions asked:

2. Which of the things you feel children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?

3. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your classroom?

All eleven aides were satisfied with at least one of the areas they had listed as being most important. Three said they were pleased with everything and then listed some of the specifics. Reading, phonics, and math were cited by two aides as areas of satisfaction. Two aides said they were pleased with progress in social attitudes and behaviors, one telling a story about a girl who had been very disruptive in class at first, but who has been able to stop crying and start working with others, making it much easier for her to enjoy school and for the rest of the class to like her.

Two aides made a point of saying how much they enjoyed working with the particular teachers they worked with this year, and expressed great satisfaction with their own roles in the classroom.

When discussing improvements in the classroom, four aides mentioned things within the "social" category, two within the "basic skills" area, and two felt that nothing needed improvement at the time.

Two aides wanted to improve their abilities to diagnose children's needs. One spoke of the importance of recognizing children with severe learning problems and working with them right away. Here she cited the help recieved from the Howard Mental Health Center. Another said that in math she and the teacher were still "searching for where they (the children) are," in order to begin instruction. She attributed the difficulty of diagnosis to the children's having memorized simple operations which made it possible for them to get by but which also made it difficult for them to progress beyond those operations. When asked how they might make the jump, she said they needed the chance to

work with more manipulative things.

Two aides talked about the problem of getting children to settle down. One said, "If a child fusses with me then I find out right away if he's had breakfast...I think finding out what's really the problem, why he doesn't want to work, is important." The other stressed the teacher's and aide's responsibility to enforce discipline. She said, "They think that they're here to play. Free play all the time, that's all they ask for," adding that she and the teacher try to explain to them that they also have to do their work.

One other aide who spoke of increasing her own skills said she would like to learn how to get children who "do what you ask and nothing more" to be more self-directed.

7.10 and 7.11 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The Burlington administrators include the two principals and the on-site project director for Follow Through. Agreement among the three administrators was fairly high. All found reading important and placed it within a wider context. All three administrators believed that children should feel good about themselves and like school. In general, the statements of the two principals had a different tone from that found in other interviews, while the project director's statements were similar to the teachers' and aides'. The expressed goals of the principals with regard to children's learning differ in emphasis from those of teachers and

aides because the principals are responsible for the whole school and tended to think of their jobs in terms of the long-range impact of schooling on society. Both of the principals felt it was important for children to learn to make decisions. They agreed with teachers, aides, and the Follow Through sponsor that social learning and academic learning are both important. The principals were joined in that opinion by the project director, who otherwise expressed opinions very similar to those of the teachers.

7.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Question asked:

1. What do you think is important for children to be doing and learning in school during the early grades?

Both principals thought children should be learning to make decisions, obtaining communication skills (including reading), experiencing success and feeling good about themselves. The project director singled out reading as one thing all children should learn. She talked at length about conditions for children's learning. Liking school was the major pre-condition for learning. She also feels that having a "good teacher" is important to a child's wanting to come to school, along with having many experiences and materials available in the classroom.

One principal believed the school should help children to feel good about themselves so that in later life they could make decisions

*See page 30

which would benefit society as a whole, although such decisions might run counter to their individual interests.

The other principal discussed the importance of children having experiences in making decisions that aren't of the life and death variety, evaluating the results of their own choices and making other choices, developing their own value systems, and learning how to succeed. He said that some children know so well how to fail that they must be given the opportunity to learn how to succeed as early as possible. When children are ready, they should learn how to communicate by speaking, listening and writing, and non-verbally through numbers, letters, symbols and even by ESP.

Questions asked:

2. Which of those things are happening to your satisfaction in your school?

3. Which of those things would you like to improve in your school?

One principal said that the things he was satisfied with depended very much on how he was feeling at the time. The other principal said, "I am increasingly confident that we are teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic without dumping on kids. I'm not sure that our tests show it yet, but I feel good about our progress here."

The principal who said that his satisfactions varied with his mood thought all areas needed improvement because they

needed to be happening faster. If he had to pick just one area needing improvement, he said it would be listening - and students, faculty, and himself should all learn to do it better. The other principal found this question difficult to answer because he thought of improvements in terms of individual teachers in different times and situations. In general, he believed there was a great deal of waste of materials and that the children's artistic and creative work was not as good as it could be. He thought this could be improved if teachers would think about, experiment with, and discuss their methods and purposes with each other. The project director* had a similar response, saying that the question was too vague because she thought in terms of specific classrooms. She felt in the preceeding years some classrooms had allowed too much freedom, not giving children enough structure and direction, but that this had improved because teachers had grown in their understanding that children need order. She also talked about getting volunteers in classrooms to be able to work with each child individually.

7.13 and 7.14 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF PARENT RESPONSE

Basic skills were of primary importance to Burlington parents, with concern for a child's social and emotional growth a strong second. Most often these two concerns were mentioned together. By far the majority of parents were satisfied with how the school

*See page 30

handled the issues they felt were most important. When parents did mention areas needing improvement, they talked about reading and the general need for more discipline and less freedom. They also commented on the roughness of the children with each other.

The apparent satisfaction may in part be a result of the manner of selecting parents for interviews, which included five parents recommended as being active in the program. We also do not know if parents who refused to be interviewed did so because of negative attitudes toward the program. However, in spite of this bias it seems important that the program was valued by most of the parents interviewed.

Compared to the other groups who were interviewed, fewer parents emphasized the importance of both academic and social learning, but enough did to indicate a fair degree of agreement between program staff and parents about what children should be learning. There is some indication that parents placed more emphasis on the need for discipline than did other responding groups.

7.15 DETAIL OF PARENT RESPONSE

Question asked:

1. What kinds of things do you feel important for your child to be doing and learning at school?

5 responses mentioned only the following academic areas:

- Reading, writing, arithmetic, alphabet printing, numbers.
- One parent felt that reading is most important.
- Another said, "Her reading could be better."
- Another stated, "Just the regular work--reading."

3 responses included only areas of children's social and emotional growth:

- Adjust to getting along better with other children at school; sharing.
- Let them work on their own with guidance; not being pushed.
- How to control temper and learn patience; how to get along better with other children.

6 responses were combinations of academic, social and emotional growth:

- Learning to get along with other people; reading, math.
- Math, reading and getting along with other children.
- Reading and arithmetic doing good; learning to be sociable; work out problems with students and parents.
- Math, reading, getting along better with other children. Not so many fights.
- Doing well in everything; enjoys school.
- Reading, spelling; likes to be on her own.

14 (all) parents interviewed responded to this question in the various ways mentioned above. Another way of presenting the response is:

10 responses included reading as important.
7 responses mentioned arithmetic.
6 responses specified getting along with other children as important.
3 responses included the importance of children working on their own.

Question Asked:

2. Of the things you have mentioned, which ones do you feel get enough attention at your child's school?

5 parents felt everything they mentioned was getting enough attention. One stated that she liked the whole program--"All children get a lot of attention."

4 parents specified academic areas which they feel get enough attention: Reading; spelling; numbers. Three of these responses noted improvement; "reading--she's getting special tutoring; spelling getting better."

1 parent said they are trying to teach her child how to control his temper and are very patient with him in doing this.

1 parent said she couldn't really answer this question because she doesn't know what a six year old should be learning at this point.

1 parent responded by saying: "I haven't been to school this year, but my other boys didn't learn to read as well as I think they should. I wasn't satisfied at all with the Follow Through program."

Question Asked:

3. Which things seem to be getting too little attention?

7 responses indicated "none".

5 parents did not respond to this question.

1 felt that reading was a problem in Follow Through.

1 parent said: "They aren't strict enough."

Question Asked:

4. What are the things you like most about the Wheeler School (including Follow Through)?

13 parents offered favorable responses to this question.
1 parent said: "I don't think it's any different from any other school."

Responses to this question seemed to refer to three categories: (a) staff, (b) school atmosphere, (c) programs Wheeler School offers for children and for parents. Comments also reveal advantages which parents feel are inherent in different aspects of the Wheeler School Program.

(a) Staff:

5 parents specified things they like about the staff at the Wheeler School:

--Staff easy to talk with.
--Good teachers.
--Cooperation with the staff.
--Young teachers, up with the times; like the kids.
--Making parents welcome in the school and welcome to participate.

(b) School atmosphere:

3 parents specifically commented about the friendly atmosphere at Wheeler School:

--Like small school; being able to go to school and have them know who I am. And children are not numbers.
--"I like the friendliness in the school. The whole environment is wrapped around the kids. It's a low income area and children get to go to a lot of different places maybe they wouldn't get to go to!"

(c) Programs the Wheeler School offers(for children and parents):

7 parents referred to:

--Everything to do with Follow Through.
--"Whole program is a nice idea. Did have doubts about it,but it seems to be working out better than expected."
--Children enjoy school in general.
--"I like the lunch program and having them there all day so I don't have to go get them at noon."
--Involves parents more.
--"I like the way it's run and they are doing more with children, trying to get to them more."
--Dental work is also a good idea.

Question Asked:

5. What are the things you like least about the Wheeler School (including Follow Through)?

4 parents indicated that there were no things in this category for them.

One said: "Nothing to complain about." Another indicated that her child was only in first grade and she really hadn't found anything yet.

5 parents mentioned specific things they liked "least":

--Physical set-up of the old building.
--Would like children to start school at 9:00(Instead of 8:30).
--Not enough cooperation(didn't specify about what).
--The open classroom.
--Parent was upset because she wrote a note asking that her children not be included in an optional activity, and they were included anyway.

2 parents had criticism regarding out of school times:

--"They should have a lot more discipline during out or after school times.
--Children hang around and beat up on each other instead of being sent home directly."
--"Not me but the other mother--
--a lot of the kids are rough--
and the mothers have to walk children to school to see that they don't get hurt."

3 parents did not respond to this question.

CHAPTER 8

THE EDC APPROACH TO LEARNING: OPINIONS OF BURLINGTON TEACHERS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concerns objectives for children's learning which have been advocated by EDC advisors. The objectives were broadly stated and related to basic principles of the EDC approach.

Burlington Follow Through teachers were asked to respond to questions about (1) encouraging open expression of children's needs and feelings in the classroom, (2) building on children's interests as a starting point for teaching, (3) giving children a greater amount of choice in what they do, and (4) evaluating children's progress on the basis of the children's abilities. The questions were used as a starting point for discussion about teachers' interpretations of the principles and about how teachers applied the principles in their classrooms.

8.2 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Open Expression

All teachers said they encouraged open expression of children's needs and feelings. Benefits were cited for the teacher and for children. Open expression was said to make it possible for the teacher to learn more about what children need and how they learn.

It was also seen as a learning experience for children. Teachers made it clear that they continue to exercise control over the kind and amount of expression in their classrooms. Some teachers said they do not initiate discussion of sensitive topics, but deal with them as they arise. However, they referred to actions they took that would be likely to stimulate such discussion, such as bringing pregnant animals into the classroom.

Building on Children's Interests

Although all teachers expressed agreement with the principle of using children's interests as a starting point for teaching, they seemed to attach different amounts of importance to children's interests as compared to basic academic subjects. Some teachers described their teaching as being centered on children's interests while others used basic skills as the center and pursued children's interests as they related to other classroom activities. Teachers talked about four related ways of building on children's interests: creating a setting where children could pursue interests, stimulating their interests in new things, encouraging children to follow an interest, and helping a child extend his or her interest into other areas.

Children's Choices

Teachers seemed to hold a range of opinions about the appropriate extent of children's choices, similar to the range of opinions about the importance of children's interests. Some teachers said they gave children choices about their academic work as well as other activities

in the classroom, but most said choices were limited to activities other than academic work. Teachers made it clear that they consider choice-making a skill that children learn, which means that teachers must help them make choices both by giving directions and by controlling the conditions for choice-making.

Evaluating Children's Progress

All of the teachers said they believed in evaluating children's progress on the basis of their own abilities. They described various methods of diagnosing children's abilities and recording their progress. The greatest emphasis was placed on abilities in the area of basic academic skills. Several teachers spoke of the difficulty of keeping track of each child's progress when so much of their work is individualized and when more than one adult is active in the classroom.

8.3 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Open Expression

The most interesting point made by teachers in responding to the question about open expression is the strictly educational function served by such expression. Teachers saw open expression as contributing significantly to the children's growing self-knowlege and self-confidence and as making it possible for teachers to understand the children and teach them better. Although an argument can be made for open expression on purely humanistic grounds, i.e., on the grounds that children have a right and a need to express themselves as human beings, the direct effects on children's learning may be more persuasive.

Building on Children's Interests

Since this question was found to overlap considerably with the next, no detailed analysis will be presented here. However, we were surprised to discover in the teachers' responses to this question that every example given of building on a specific child's interests involved boys. We can only wonder whether this was an accident of whether it reflected a classroom reality. Do teachers consciously or unconsciously work harder to build on boys' interests than on girls'? It may be that girls are socialized to be more easily satisfied with standard school work and that boys, who so often cause problems in classrooms, become easier to work with when they are pursuing their personal interests, causing teachers to concentrate more on boys' interests than on girls'.

Children's Choices

Discussion about the appropriate number and kinds of choices for children seemed to reflect teachers' feelings about children's abilities to make appropriate choices. Teachers seemed to agree that increasing the range of choices for children is an important goal. Choice-making is viewed as a skill to be learned. Limiting the number of available choices or otherwise helping children to choose can be seen as a technique for improving children's choice-making skills. Teachers stressed the necessity for children to learn basic academic skills, such as reading and math. Most teachers felt responsible for planning and directing children's academic work. They most frequently encouraged children to make choices about

non-academic activities. Free choice for children has an important but limited role in structuring learning experiences in Follow Through classrooms.

Evaluating Children's Progress

Teachers' use of grade levels as a measure for diagnosing ability suggests a distinction between using grade levels to determine where a child is able to function and using them to determine where the child should be. The difference is fine enough to be potentially confusing. Evaluating children's progress on the basis of their abilities presumably means working with them on their own level rather than treating them all as if they had the same abilities. Finding the child's level of performance in terms of grade levels is one way to do that. The danger is that the grade level measure is so often used as a prescriptive standard, as the level at which all the children are supposed to be functioning. If they aren't, something is assumed to be wrong with the child or the teacher or both. It is not clear how strong this tendency is, but there were signs that it is active. One teacher told of having to reassure some parents by comparing their children's level with a chart giving the "normal" level for children by their age in months. Another teacher spoke of feeling that the pressures for "accountability" could easily lead in this direction. She said that the check sheets used to record children's skill development, obstensibly to keep a record of progress, "evolves into teachers feeling pressure to get these kids checked off, which is transmitted to the kids, and then -- final horrible step -- these kids

can only acquire these skills in this order!" One of the forces influencing teachers to use grade levels may have been revealed when a teacher stated that the problem with her reports to parents on their children's progress was that she was always so enthusiastic that the parents tended to be disappointed the next year if the children had problems.

The problems some teacher talked about in trying to keep records on children's progress when they have many different activities and more than one adult in the classroom seem important enough to be emphasized as an area for EDC advisory work. Since both teachers and parents need to know how the children are progressing and since EDC is reluctant to evaluate children's abilities solely on the basis of standardized tests, it would seem appropriate for EDC advisors to offer sustained assistance to teachers who are trying to develop methods of diagnosing children's abilities and recording their progress that are better suited to their classes.

Three points deserve emphasis in analyzing the responses included in this chapter. One is the unexpected coherence found among the four separate questions. The second is the teachers' descriptions of their roles in the classroom as being extremely active, contrary to the caricature of the passive teacher in open or progressive classrooms. The third is the persistent distinction made by most teachers between children's work on basic academic skills and other kinds of classroom activities.

(1) The four questions asked of Burlington teachers in this section were derived largely from an interview schedule used in another study. ("Teacher Interview for 'A Study of Teachers in Open Education Settings'" by the Early Education Group at Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, Spring, 1972.) They were selected because they seemed to be broad enough that teachers in many kinds of classrooms would agree with them. They were not intended to define open education or to represent a coherent set of principles.

Therefore, the interrelations discovered among teachers' responses to the questions were interesting because they tended to establish at least a beginning of a coherent set of principles that guide EDC Follow Through teachers' practices. Free choice and open expression by children, in addition to promoting their learning was seen as giving teachers the opportunity to observe what they are interested in and what their abilities are. Records of those observations were said to help teachers evaluate children's progress and to build on their interests.

(2) Teachers' responses indicated that they take seriously their responsibility to plan and initiate classroom work, to monitor children's learning, and to intervene to improve it. It would not be necessary to emphasize this if it were not for the widespread belief that the open classroom relieves the teacher of these responsibilities and leaves everything up to the child.

The difference between conventional classrooms and those described by many Burlington teachers is not the difference between order and chaos but the difference between imposing a set plan on all of the children versus creating environments in which teachers can learn about individual children and in which children can learn in ways that are appropriate to them. This was described as a very difficult and challenging task, but a rewarding one. We hope that one result of this report will be that teachers will learn from the Burlington teachers' statements that open classroom teaching is truly teaching, and that it demands more, not less, teacher initiative and responsibility than does conventional teaching.

(3) Many responses implied that a distinction was being made between learning of "basic skills," especially math and reading, and other classroom activities. The distinction seemed to be more between those times or those activities that were devoted primarily to the learning of skills and those devoted to more broadly defined purposes. The first group, the basic skills learning, often seemed to involve textbooks, workbooks, regular small group meetings with an adult, and assigned work. Much of this was highly individualized, but it was primarily teacher directed. The other kinds of activities were more varied and, generally,

allowed more choice for the children. These activities were often related to specific "areas," placed in the classroom where the appropriate materials are stored and used.

The apparent belief of all but one or two teachers was that if children are to learn basic skills, then those skills must be taught to them in relatively conventional form at least part of the time. Most of these teachers stressed how all activities children engage in contribute to their learning, but that teacher directed instruction in basic skills was necessary.

8.4 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Question Asked

1. EDC Follow Through encourages open expression of children's needs and feelings in the classroom. Do you share this goal?

All eleven teachers said that they share the goal of encouraging children to express their needs and feelings. Responses to the first follow-up question "What benefits do you see in open expression?" fell into two categories: benefits to the teacher and benefits to the children. Benefits to the teacher were mentioned explicitly by two teachers. They believed teachers could learn more about what children need and how they learn when the children were encouraged to express themselves openly. As one teacher put it, "You can tell from what they want what they need."

Other benefits listed were related to children, though some, such as improving relationships, could include teachers as well.

required that they do some academic work each day. Other problems included the need to have sufficient private space in the classroom to allow children to talk about sensitive things that happen at home.

The final follow-up question, designed to elicit examples of open expression, was, "Do you encourage talk about things like sex, death, birth, race, and the fears children have?" The most frequent response was that the teacher did not make a point of bringing up such subjects but she would deal with them when they arose. Several teachers gave illustrations of how a subject like sex would arise. Such conversations would follow the teacher's bringing things like birds' nests or pregnant animals into the classroom. Four teachers said that race was something they did bring up in their classroom and that this could be difficult because the city is "so white." as one teacher put it. One such discussion developed after a field trip to a turkey farm where the children became curious about the turkeys' different colors.

One teacher, who believed talking about sensitive issues was important, expressed her ambivalence about encouraging such talk. She said she did not know how parents would reach to children being exposed to views that might differ from those of their parents.

Question Asked:

2. EDC's Follow Through program stressed "building on children's interests" as a starting point for teaching. Do you agree with this principle?

   If yes: How does this work out in practice. First, how do you find out what a child's interests are? (examples) How do you build on those interests? (examples)

All eleven teachers indicated basic agreement with the idea of using children's interests as a starting point for learning. The qualifications and comments in response to questions probing how teachers build on children's interests indicated a range of importance attached to "building on children's interest." Some teachers seemed to see children's interests as the foundation of their teaching, while others stressed the basic skills curriculum, describing children's interests as important in other areas.

Three teachers qualified their agreement with the principle of "building on children's interests" by adding that children's interests were not sufficient in themselves as a starting point for teaching. One stated that some children don't know what their interests are. Another, in making the same point, said that you can't leave all the learning to the children's interests because their experiences have not been varied enough. The teacher needs to introduce new things to Follow Through children in order to stimulate their interest and their learning. The third teacher distinguished between basic academic subjects such as math, reading, and spelling, which she said should be directed by the teacher and

other areas in which learning could grow out of children's interests. An example she gave was a unit on American Indians that grew out of a child's report on sign language.

When asked how they learn what children's interests are, nine teachers said by observation, six said by working with the children, and five said by talking with children. Observation seemed to have a specialized meaning as used in this context. Teachers spoke of intentionally and systematically noting what children choose to do in their free time -- including books chosen, pictures drawn, and imaginative play -- what they write about, what they bring in to share with others, and how they react to things the teacher puts in the classroom. Such observation suggests a close relationship to the other parts of the EDC approach discussed in this chapter -- open expression of children's feelings, and allowing children to make choices. Teachers said they learned a great deal about what children are interested in and how they learn by encouraging them to express themselves openly and to make choices. One teacher who said she learned about children's interests from talking with them said, succinctly, "Give children freedom of conversation and listen."

Working with children on a regular basis was given as the context for observation and conversation with children. The importance of the context suggests a point that several teachers made or implied. That is, that the teacher must create proper conditions for learning what children's interests are.

Perhaps the best way to summarize the responses to our questions about how teachers build on children's interests is with a teacher's comment, "Encourage what you discover." Examples were given of seeing a child building a bridge and sending him to the Learning Center and Resource Center to do more building, of teaching counting with racing cars, of bringing in an airport game for a boy who likes planes, and encouraging a boy who received a silkworm incubator for his birthday to write "volumes" and spend "hours in the library" learning about insects.

One teacher described bringing materials into the classroom to encourage the interests of some children and working with another teacher to tie reading and math into an activity that all the children enjoyed.

From teachers' comments, four related ways of building on children's interests can be discerned. The first is that the teacher creates a setting in which children are able to pursue their interests. Second, the teacher can be active in stimulating children's interests, bringing in materials or planning activities to create interest and then working to build on that interest. Third, when a child has demonstrated an interest, the teacher can encourage the child to maintain it, again with appropriate materials, time and verbal assurances that it is valued. An example was given of a boy who became very involved in writing a report on sunflowers. He didn't want to take time

out to do his math that day and the teacher told him that she didn't expect him to because he was busy with something that was important to him. The fourth way of building on children's interests was often called "extending". This refers to starting with a particular interest and using it to lead into other areas, particularly areas of reading and math. The boy counting racing cars was one example of this. An important part of this process is the teacher being aware that other learning is taking place. One teacher described a boy who was very interested in drawing and said that he had even learned math by doing it: "I worry that he isn't getting his addition, but when I talk with him about his pictures I see he is."

Question Asked

3. EDC's Follow Through program emphasized giving children a greater amount of choice in what they do. Is this one of your goals?

   If yes: What kinds of things do they make choices about? On what basis do they choose: whims, what friends are doing, genuine interests, etc.? How do you know when a choice is based on genuine interests? Do you help children choose? How?

Discussion of responses to the question about children's choices in the classroom requires a definition of the term "activities," which was often used by teachers to describe the things children were allowed to choose among.

Four teachers mentioned art as one of the activities in their room, three mentioned games, both for recreation and instruction.

Two mentioned listening to records and tapes, and individual teachers talked about listening to stories, playing in the doll house or playhouse, and working with plants. Some teachers listed more obviously academic activities such as working on projects about Indians or space, and one included reading and math in the list. Although open education theory holds that any number of "activities" can have direct benefit for the learning of "academic" subjects such as reading and math, there seems to be a clear distinction in the minds of most teachers between academics -- reading and math, complete with texts and workbooks though often individualized -- and activities -- including examples listed above that may or may not contribute directly to the child's development of skills in reading and math.

The question about children's choices revealed a range of numbers and kinds of choices. Two teachers said that children choose activities when they have finished their academic work. Four other teachers spoke of specific times when all, or some class members could choose an activity. Another group of three teachers described the same arrangement, but added such things as choosing a particular housekeeping task in the classroom. The final two teachers said that children regularly make choices about academic work as well as other activities, though one said that the teacher and aide identify certain children and work with them on things they think the children should be doing. In

both these cases, the choices seemed to be mainly when the academic work would be done, not if it would be done. One of these teachers mentioned having encouraged a boy not to interrupt his work on sunflowers to do math. She also described a "contract" system used to help structure some children's learning.

Types of Choices Children Make and Number of Teachers Citing Each Type

Choices Made About	Number of Teachers
Activities when academic work is finished	2
Activities during time for non-academic work	4
Activities and other non-academic things	3
Activities and academic work	2

All of the teachers who were asked whether they ever help children make choices said that they did in some way. The most often mentioned way of helping children to choose involved direct suggestion or guidance into a broader range of activities (five mentions). Three teachers also talked about narrowing the range of choices offered as a way of helping children to choose. Two said they limit the number of children for each activity. Other approaches included spelling out choices, preventing one child from monopolizing an activity, and seeing that children finished

activities they started.

Teachers said they helped children who were unable to make choices on their own, especially if they were not doing anything or doing the same thing all the time (six mentions). Three other situations calling for teachers' help were children choosing to do something they did not have the skills for; children who were not finished with one activity who wanted to start another; and children whose choice was not available. Three teachers told of starting the school year allowing a large number of choices than they offered at the time they were interviewed. All said that the children had not been ready to make so many choices, so it had become necessary to restrict the number of choices available. One teacher added that it might have had to do with the types of choices or the way they were set up. Two other teachers described the opposite procedure, saying that they had intentionally started off gradually and added more choices as the children learned to deal with them.

When asked what they considered the basis for children's choices, most teachers responded in terms of the interviewers' examples -- doing what friends do (three mentions) or genuine interest (three mentions). One teacher said that there is a tendency among both children and adults to do what comes easily, what they are comfortable with. Another teacher said she was surprised to find many children choosing what they think they

should do, such as math work. When questioned about how they could tell what the basis for choice was, most of the teachers who responded (four) said that children would stick to things they were genuinely interested in, or they would quickly become dissatisfied with choices that didn't reflect their own interest. One teacher said children would often tell her if they were strongly interested in something.

Question Asked

4. EDC Follow Through encourages evaluating children's progress on the basis of their own abilities. Do you try to do this in your classroom?

   If yes: How do you diagnose a child's ability? How do you keep track of each child's progress? How do you share your evaluation of the child's progress with parents?

All eleven teachers agreed with the principle of evaluating children's progress on the basis of the children's abilities, and said they tried to do this in their classrooms. One teacher responded, "I can't imagine how else you do it," and another spelled it out as "not comparing one child with another." However, there were some differences in the ways that teachers went about this, reflecting different interpretations of the principle.

When asked how they diagnose a child's ability, eight teachers said they looked for skills related to reading, writing, and math. Two teachers stated a concern with perceptual skills related to academic abilities. One of those teachers had constructed a Piagetian diagnostic instrument to measure those skills, and both

teachers used it with their classes. Four teachers specifically mentioned placing children on grade levels according to teacher-constructed tests, informal reading inventories, and "level sheets" -- made up by teachers in the school and in use for several years. Two of these teachers also relied on the sequencing of textbooks to diagnose children's abilities; since the difficulty of the books is known, the child's facility with the books is used as a measure of his or her ability.

From the descriptions given of diagnosing ability levels, it seems that for some teachers skill levels are formally tested only at the beginning of the year, and followed later by less formal methods of keeping track of progress. Others made it clear that they continue testing on a regular basis, e.g., "I periodically test kids myself to see what they know." But in all cases, informal observation and testing seem to be used often. One teacher said that you have to "give children many kinds of opportunities to show what they can do." Another said that she could tell which children were having trouble because they would stay away from activities requiring the skills they lacked. The reliance on informal measures of ability emphasizes the importance of allowing children choices and free expression, since these seem to reflect children's progress.

One teacher used the question about diagnosing children's abilities as a springboard for bringing up another kind of diagnosis.

The thrust of our question was evaluating individual children, but she expressed concern about evaluating the class as a whole. Specifically, she was concerned about the best balance between individualized learning and free choice on one hand, and "large group structured kinds of things" on the other. She felt that the latter were necessary, if only to give the teacher respite from the rigors of dealing with so many different activities. She wondered, however, whether they were appropriate in an open classroom and, if so, how to evaluate the learning that takes place in them.

Only two teachers volunteered that they consult the records kept by previous teachers as an aid to diagnosing children's abilities. One of those mentioned that she had talked with Head Start teachers and was surprised to learn that this was an unusual practice.

Teachers were asked how they keep track of children's progress, and all eleven reported keeping some kinds of records of children's activities such as what they did during the day, which adult or adults worked with the child, what was accomplished. Five teachers said they kept "anecdotal" records noting important incidents of various kinds. The third category of records concerned skills development. Four teachers mentioned keeping records of reading skills and four mentioned math records. Only one teacher said she kept all three kinds of records. The forms these records took

included: (1) notes, apparently in narrative style; (2) prepared checklists or other instruments; (3) notation of children's progress in textbooks; and (4) a chart showing expected performance for age. Finally, there seem to be two emphases given to the purposes for keeping records. One is to keep track of children's overall accomplishments and difficulties. The other is to check off children's progress in pre-determined skill areas.

Responses to "How do you keep track of children's progress?"

Types of records kept of children's progress	Number of Mentions
Record of Child's activities	11
Anecdotal records	5
Records of skills development	4

One teacher offered a vivid picture of the advantages and the problems of keeping records of children's progress. She was in favor of evaluating children on the basis of their abilities, and gave an example of how her records had helped her deal with a problem. She said that a boy who had been in her class the previous year began this school year acting in a very immature way. She was very bothered by this until she checked her records from the previous year and found that he had used the same strategy for testing the classroom situation then but had eventually dropped it. This was reassuring for her and for the boy's mother.

The same teacher commented that "When one's teaching is so highly individualized, it's difficult to keep track of each child's progress." She then related that each year she starts out with the best of intentions but soon finds herself overwhelmed with the ditto forms and categories and within three weeks she has given up the effort. She also expressed the hope that she, her aide, and student teacher would work out a manageable and useful system for keeping records. Her feeling was that they would probably throw out all the prepared forms and just keep a looseleaf notebook with pages for each child. Entries would concern anything that seemed significant for that child.

It is easy to imagine other teachers having the same problem since they all listed large numbers of things they do, and all have many different things going on in their classrooms simultaneously. A complicating factor in record keeping is the presence of more than one adult in the same classroom. This helps with the work but requires even more elaborate record systems.

Seven of the eight teachers who were asked specifically about how they shared their evaluation of children's progress with parents said they relied primarily on scheduled conferences. The eighth teacher stressed phone calls to parents immediately after problems occur. She said this gave good results "as long as the child knows the parent and teacher are in partnership for him." One reason for the emphasis on conferences is that both schools do not

give report cards in Follow Through or non-Follow Through classes. One teacher said that in addition to conferences she often sent notes home with children. She was pleased that children often asked her to send notes home with them when they made progress. Three teachers specifically mentioned sharing records with parents during conferences.

CHAPTER 9

RESPONSES OF BURLINGTON TEACHERS, AIDES, AND ADMINISTRATORS TO QUESTIONS CONCERNING EDC ADVISORS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The questions reported in this section were designed to elicit responses about advisor activities. Teachers and aides were asked about advisors' visits to their classrooms, about advisors' work outside classrooms - specifically about various kinds of workshops and individual conferences, and about how they communicated with advisors. All three groups were asked both what they had done with advisors and how they felt about it. They were also asked for suggestions about other things they would like to see advisors do. Administrators were also asked what they knew about EDC advisors' work with others.

Our aim in designing and asking these questions was to spell out the kinds of things we knew advisors did and then ask specifically whether each had worked with EDC advisors on each kind of activity and how valuable that activity had been.

9.2 OVERALL SUMMARY OF TEACHER, AIDE AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The two major categories of advisor activities with teachers and aides were reported to be classroom visits and workshops. Conferences were seen by teachers and aides as connected with one or

both of those activities. For example, when advisors were said to observe in classrooms, a conference to discuss the results of the observations was seen as a natural follow-up of observation, not as a separate activity. Conferences were a major advisor activity with administrators.

The majority of teachers and aides and all the administrators saw advisors' work in classrooms as valuable.

9.3. OVERALL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE, AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Probably the most interesting comparison among groups is between the teachers' and aides' responses to these questions. The aides indicated that, in general, they followed the teachers' lead in classroom procedure, which included their work with EDC advisors.

Teachers and aides had divergent opinions on some of the same advisor activities. The differences of opinion suggest that different teachers and aides respond favorably to different kinds of advisor activities.

The major recommendation to come out of this finding is that EDC advisors should try to determine precisely what kinds of advisory services each teacher and each aide can use and then to deliver those services selectively so that, for example, new teachers and experienced teachers would not be given the same introduction to the open classroom at the beginning of every school year.

9.4 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

The teachers' statements indicate that not all teachers were working closely with EDC advisors when the interviews were conducted. In particular, the teachers with the most experience in Follow Through and those teaching the upper grades said they did not often have advisors in their classrooms. There was some difference of opinion among teachers about workshops. Advisors were generally seen as responsive to teachers' requests. There was also much agreement that advisors were particularly helpful when a teacher was first learning to teach in an open classroom.

9.5 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Two experienced teachers who said they hadn't worked much with EDC advisors were located in classrooms which were physically removed from the other Follow Through classrooms. The teachers with the most experience in Follow Through said they had worked closely with EDC advisors in the past but no longer felt that they

needed as much advisory assistance and suggested that advisors should use their time with the newer teachers. In all of these cases, there seemed to be some question in the teachers' minds about having someone coming into their rooms to make suggestions about different ways of teaching. It is hard for us to know how much of this is related to genuine satisfaction with current teaching practices and how much may reflect fear of criticism or disagreement with open classroom practices. EDC advisors generally try to work with teachers who want their help, but as advisors, also have an obligation to work toward implementing an open classroom program. How to work with teachers who would rather not be advised is an important question for advisors to consider.

The different opinions about workshops suggest that the workshops sometimes exhibit characteristics of traditional classrooms that people who believe in open education may find undesirable, i.e., that all teachers have been expected to attend workshops whether or not those workshops are relevant to their interests and appropriate to their current needs. In particular, there seem to be very different workshop needs on the part of teachers just starting out in Follow Through as compared to those who have had extensive experience. Furthermore, there may be some built-in conflicts between the aims of EDC advisors who have tried to focus summer workshops on exploring large issues and re-thinking approaches to teaching and the priorities of teachers who are

thinking about getting their rooms and their plans ready for the start of a new school year. Two teachers had high praise for workshops in Boston where they had been able to plan their own agendas and address issues important to them at that time. This format may be a productive one for some teachers.

Overall, the EDC advisors were seen as helpful, responsive, and crucial to the development of open classrooms. Teachers who had disagreements or reservations with some of the things EDC advisors had done were quick to add that they had learned from advisors.

9.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

If yes:

Who usually initiates the contact?
What do they usually do?
What do you do while they are in the room?
Have you found their work helpful?
Can you give me some examples?
Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in your classroom?

If no:

Would you like them to work in your classroom?
What do you know about what they do in other teachers' classrooms?

Eight teachers said, "yes," two teachers said, "no," and one teacher said, "to a limited extent."

Of the two teachers who said "no", one was hesitant about advisors just coming into the classroom. She said, "If I had a problem, I could take it to the advisor and perhaps that would be the time to work in my classroom." She did say, however, that her classroom is always open to anyone who wants to come in. The other teacher felt she knew what advisors did in the classroom (observation and special projects) from meetings and the learning center, but she didn't want that kind of help.

Two teachers experienced in Follow Through said that they didn't see advisors much anymore. They felt advisors should be spending time with newer teachers. Another experienced teacher said that she maintains contact with all advisors--the nature of the contact depending on each advisor's particular style.

Three first-year Follow Through teachers offered additional responses to the questions. One teacher said that the current EDC advisor asked everyone at the summer workshop to write to tell him how they wanted to work with him. Another said that the project director notified her about an appointment with the advisor. The third teacher said that she contacted the advisor because she was concerned about some aspects of her classroom scheduling.

In describing what advisors do in the classroom, four

teachers said that EDC advisors had come in to observe their classes. Two teachers said that EDC advisors observe classes and work with groups of children or individual children. Two teachers said that, along with observation and working with children, EDC advisors take notes and share feedback later.

All eight teachers who indicated that EDC advisors have visited their classrooms said that advisors make specific suggestions or observations or give some kind of feedback. Feedback sessions generally occur in individual conferences outside the classroom, since more teachers continue working while advisors are in their classroom.

One experienced teacher, in speaking of her contacts with advising in the classroom, said that the classroom contact had been so helpful to her in the past that she really didn't need advisors to come in anymore to observe, work with children, and make suggestions. What she felt she needed was "time to use and really become acquainted with a lot of materials we have now".

Another experienced teacher said that she found advisors responsive to specific requests. "Either they can help or next time they will bring someone who can." She spoke of "plugging in people with particular skills" to "take a look at what we're doing and give us some feedback on how we might help kids...".

When talking about advisors' observations, first and second year Follow Through teachers were more specific. One recalled a

a specific incident:

> "(Advisor) observed what I did with a child and told me a different approach I might try." Another said, "I was unhappy with math. He came in, made suggestions." A third said that advisors observe "individual kids, my interaction with kids, and space.... " always ask them to take notes...because I want something down to refer to...notes on individual children, exactly what they are doing, step-by-step. I find that really helpful."

Five teachers responded to the question about what they do while the EDC advisors are in their classroom. Four said they continue teaching. One said she tries to observe what the advisors are doing with children.

Most teachers with three to five years experience in Follow Through reported that they saw advisors infrequently and don't expect advisors to spend a lot of time with them. One of these teachers said that there really isn't anything she'd like to have advisors do in the classroom. In contrast, another "experienced" teachers is always ready to have advisors respond to specific requests she has about what's happening in her classroom.

Five of the seven first or second year Follow Through teachers had a number of "would like" suggestions regarding advisors' work in the classroom. One said, "I'd rather work with people I know like (a particular advisor)" and "I'd prefer working with advisors outside of the classroom." A teacher in her first year with Follow Through said that she's not really ready for more help because there are too many new things and new people. She said

that she felt pulled in so many directions by so many people that she wanted to stop and get things organized in her own head before talking with so many other people.

Two other teachers described lists of things they would like to see advisors do in the classroom. One said,

> "I'd like to have an advisor work on a project right along with me...helping me go to my classroom and set up...something which I need...ideas are great but I don't have all that time to carry them out sometimes, and I'd just love to have someone, once we talk about ideas, to get right down to the nuts and bolts of putting the thing together and seeing it work."

Another teacher said that she'd like to have advisors work with children to give her examples to follow. More specifically, she could use help with specific children, such as a girl with a serious physical disability. She'd like more help on how a classroom could be arranged; help with how adults in the classroom could get closer; and tips on handling unruly behavior of children. She would also like to know if the advisor sees anything missing in the curriculum that she and the aide have created.

One teacher had felt particularly involved with three former EDC advisors. She stated, "I always felt free to talk to them and ask them for things." However, there were also things she had not liked about an advisor's manner. She felt that a particular advisor had been rude in the way he went about helping, for example, criticizing a teacher or aide in front of the children in unhelpful and inappropriate ways:

> An advisor was showing me how to do math games when a child showed me a picture. I told the child that it was nice and we'd talk later. The advisor jumped up and said, "You shouldn't have done that." I didn't mind being told I had handled it incorrectly, but I didn't think the time or the way he did it was appropriate.

This teacher suggested that advisors make notes and discuss things later, not in the classroom:

> I think what they have to offer is excellent, but I cannot give my attention to it when I am responsible for 15 or 20 children.

She went on to say that to give complete attention to what advisors are saying and trying to work with the children at the same time is not fair to the advisors, the children, or herself.

Questions Asked:

2. <u>I'd like to know ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside the classroom</u>.

   (a) Have you ever attended a summer workshop in Burlington with an EDC advisor?

   (b) Have you ever attended a workshop during the year in Burlington with an advisor?

   (c) Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?

   (d) Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?

   (e) Are there any other ways you have worked with an EDC advisor outside the classroom? What are they?

   If yes to any of the above:

   Which ways were most helpful?

   Would you like to be able to work with EDC advisors in other ways?

What? Why?

If no to all of the above:

Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom?

What do you know about what they have done with other teachers outside the classroom?

3. Thinking about all the things EDC advisors do, including any that you have not mentioned yet, which do you see as most helpful? Why?

Which are least helpful? Why?

Are there any other things you would like to see them do?

Summer Workshops

Ten teachers said that they had attended at least one summer workshop. One experienced teacher recalled the first summer workshop as being the best. She found that EDC advisors had helped her to move from a traditional to a more open classroom, and she thought summer workshops were still of great value to teachers new to the program. She noted that summer workshops were now being organized by teachers and aides in Burlington and she said she preferred having them run by EDC advisors.

Seven teachers commented specifically on the 1973 summer workshop, which had been on the topic of the design and use of space in the open classroom. One teacher said that she thought the workshop was foolish. She became antagonistic toward the consultant who gave the workshop and finally left. She said others felt the same way - hostile toward being asked to think abstractly

about classroom space when they were most in need of concrete work to prepare for the children's arrival.

Three of the first-year teachers had a similar reaction to the workshop. One said she went away from the workshop led by the EDC advisor, confused and she had felt unprepared for the openness. She liked the sessions run by other teachers much better. The second said that EDC sometimes pushes things that are hard to do in an actual classroom, but added that one idea they had suggested - having a "high gear area" for active movement - had worked out. The third first-year teacher said she had been so preoccupied with getting to work in her own classroom that she could hardly remember that workshop. The fourth first-year teacher said the workshop on space had been good.

Workshops During the School Year

Six teachers said they had attended school-year workshops run by EDC advisors in Burlington. Those who said they had not attended such workshops were in their first year in Follow Through and had not yet had the opportunity. One teacher did not respond to this question. An experienced Follow Through teacher said at this point she considered workshops more of a nuisance than a help. She goes only if someone thinks she can contribute something that will help a new teacher. Another experienced Follow Through teacher said that she had found workshops during the school year to be particularly helpful in her first year in Follow Through.

One teacher singled out in-service training days with an EDC Follow Through consultant as very helpful to her. Two teachers said they went to all of the school-year workshops -- one said all had been good; the other said she liked the ones that were about things she didn't know, and singled out one as being unhelpful because it involved role playing a parent-child relationship which was "too far from the real thing."

Workshops at EDC in Boston

Three first-year Follow Through teachers had not yet had an opportunity to attend a Boston workshop. Two teachers said they would like to visit. Of the other eight teachers, six had attended Boston workshops.

Two teachers liked the opportunity the Boston workshops provided for observation of open classrooms. One teacher thought that doing the workshop activities after discussing them was good. One teacher who had attended two or three Boston workshops had had extensive comments:

> The one I liked the very most was not structured ahead of time...We met as a group for four days and planned what we wanted. I had come with a specific list of things I wanted help about. I was able to accomplish each and every one.

She went on to say that the second Boston workshop which she attended was more structured and consequently more frustrating for her. She preferred to have the freedom to say, "Hey, this is what I need." She'd rather find someone to plug into her needs, not visit schools.

She also commented on EDC-Newton having beautiful space and equipment. She had found all these experiences away from Burlington very different and helpful. She worried that funds for Boston workshops were being cut back.

Another teacher said:

> The workshop that I did go to in Boston, I think was one of the best things that ever happened to me in the whole field of education. I learned more from that than I did for any of my college studies. It was really great...They said, "What do you want?" Now, maybe that happens all the time...I was very fortunate because anything I asked for I received.

Individual Conferences with EDC Advisors

Only one first-year Follow Through teacher reported that she had not yet had an individual conference with an EDC advisor. The ten other Follow Through teachers listed the following as categories of individual conference advising (some teachers responded in more than one category).

5 advisors give feedback on classroom observations

4 advisors make responses to specific questions/requests

3 talked out problems with advisors or just talked

1 advisor had given suggestions for starters in the classroom when she was new to Follow Through.

One teacher said that suggestions on "extensions" and use of materials was very helpful at the beginning of the program. However, now she needs times to use the suggestions and get acquainted with the materials. She added that sometimes just

talking with advisors is a lift--it gives one something to come back with.

Another teacher said that advisors have been very responsive to specific requests. She reported that at least twice and most recently with (the current EDC liaison advisor), she said,

> "I really want someone to come in here, take a look at what we're doing, and give us some feedback on how we might help kids to be more independent. Also to give suggestions on ways we might extend some of the activity going on in the classroom."

An experienced teacher said that two years ago, she had told an EDC advisor that she felt lost and the advisor suggested that she start children in a specific reading series. The teacher said that had made her feel better because at the time she didn't know enough about the program to even ask questions and the advisor's suggestion got her moving. This teacher said she now feels comfortable with her room and she thinks the children feel comfortable so she doesn't need help or suggestions for change at this time.

Refering to EDC advisors, another teacher said, "The people are wonderful and most helpful." Particularly, she said,

> "I always like specifics...I really admired what (an EDC liaison advisor) did--he showed me other ways of extending in my classroom...I'm not good at thinking things up on the spur of the moment--with superior teaching, like this advisor demonstrated."

The five other teachers made less detailed statements. One

cited two EDC advisors and a consultant as making good suggestions from classroom observations. Another found individual conferences in Boston helpful. A third appreciated the current liaison advisor's suggestions after a classroom observation. The fourth liked the individual conferences, but would like to have demonstrations in the classroom. The fifth teacher mentioned her preference for feedback sessions after classroom observations, not while the children are in the room.

Other Ways of Working with EDC Advisors

In response to the question, "What other ways have you worked with advisors outside the classroom," one teacher said that after individual conferences on problems, advisors would send information in the mail. Another teacher said that she'd helped an EDC advisor plan and coordinate a poetry workshop.

Some additional comments made in response to this question included wishes for an advisor's help with working with parents and with creative writing. One teacher who had expressed her disagreement about some of the things EDC advisors had done said she did not feel good about being antagonistic toward EDC, but that she felt the EDC approach to Follow Through had been, "a beautiful idea that hasn't worked."

Question Asked:

4. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do (with you or with others)? How do they usually respond?

When asked how they let EDC advisors know about things they would like to see them do, five teachers said they spoke with advisors personally when the advisors came to Burlington. Both the current liaison advisor and previous advisors were praised for their responsiveness to this kind of approach. Three teachers said they would let the project director know when they wanted an advisor's help. One of these teachers made the point that in order to do this, she needs to know not only her own needs, but also which advisors will be coming and what their strengths are. Other methods of communicating requests were writing letters, signing a sheet passed around by the project director, filling out a form distributed by the EDC advisor, and going through the local advisor (a position that no longer exists in Burlington Follow Through).

9.7 SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

The Burlington aides described advisors' activities in their classrooms as (1) making suggestions or helping with problems, (2) observing, or (3) working with children. Some saw these activities as helpful while others did not. There was also variation in aides' opinions about the value of workshops run by EDC advisors. Workshops that some aides considered very useful were seen as a waste of time by others. Communication with EDC advisors did not seem to be a problem, and most aides said that advisors were very responsive to requests they had made.

9.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

The most interesting characteristic of the responses to the question about what advisors do in classrooms was the difference between general and specific comments. The only negative or mixed opinions on the advisors' work showed up in general commentary. No particular advisor was pinpointed as being unhelpful. On the other hand, when specific advisors were named, only complimentary statements were made. This may reflect the identification of the researchers with EDC. However, there seems to be a positive implication in the fact that nearly all aides could name at least one advisor who had been helpful, even if they did not appreciate the work of all EDC advisors.

Some additional information helps to explain the differences of opinion among aides about the value of workshops. First, an aide pointed out that the summer workshops were sometimes awkward because teachers and aides were anxious to get into their classrooms and prepare for the opening of school. Second, the EDC consultant who gave the workshop on classroom space which was referred to, had led the teachers and aides into the process of thinking about the arrangement of space in their classrooms by beginning with broad concepts about space, rather than

beginning with classrooms. The consultant seemed to have thought that this would allow the participants to approach their own classrooms with new ideas and a fresh vision; this seems to have been accomplished in some cases, but it also proved frustrating for those who were anxious to get right into preparations for the new school year.

There are at least two important factors suggested here that need to be considered in planning future workshops. One is that it seems to be impossible to plan a single workshop that speaks to the needs of all teachers and aides. The second is that, even if all or most participants are interested in the topic of a workshop, the approach may not appeal to all of them.

9.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

   If yes:

   What do they usually do?
   Do they work directly with you?
   What do you do while they are in the room?
   Have you found their work helpful? (Ask for examples)
   Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in the classroom?

If no:

> Would you like advisors to work in your classroom? What do you know about what they do in other classrooms?

Ten of the aides said that advisors had visited their classrooms. The eleventh asked, "Which one's are EDC's?" So many people came in and out of the classroom that it was difficult to identify EDC advisors. The activity most often mentioned by aides was making suggestions or otherwise helping with specific classroom problems. Some specific ways mentioned in which advisors helped were in setting up a math curriculum, giving advice on arrangement of space, introducing weaving, and helping to start a terrarium. Four aides said that advisors observed in their classrooms. Most said that the advisors took notes and talked with the teacher and aide afterward. The advisors were said to observe individual children, uses of space, and strengths and weaknesses in classroom practices. Three aides said that advisors sometimes worked directly with children.

When asked to give opinions and suggestions on advisor work in the classroom, the Burlington aides responded in varied ways. Some made comments about the advisory services in general. Others pinpointed particular advisor activities.

General -- Nine aides made general statements about the advisory services. Three aides responded positively. One said, "They've been a great help. I think they're doing a good job."

Another said, "I think it's up to us to ask for help if we need it. Anything we have asked for they've responded to." A third aide was more specific, saying that notes on observation of children and ideas on room organizations have been helpful and informative.

On the other side of the coin, four aides had either negative or mixed opinions about advisors. One aide said, "I'd just as soon not have them. Too many adults in the room isn't good." Another aide explained why she had resisted the current EDC advisor's suggestions. She said that in earlier years, with the exception of the year just past, she had felt that advisors treated teachers and aides like children, gave too much negative criticism, and didn't let themselves be known.

> I fought them. I found them not as communicative and honest as I felt they could be...I didn't like their guessing games of always coming up with a better way--'Why that?' or 'You come up with the why's'...if I was so intelligent I wouldn't need their guidance in the first place.

This aide's major criticism was that she felt the advisors always put the burden of problem solving on teachers and aides, and were never open with their own thoughts. However, she seemed to be establishing a more productive relationship with the current advisor.

A third aide expressed a similar complaint about the technique some advisors had used of turning questions back to the questioner.

> (Two previous advisors) always seemed to be able to give me a really solid answer, where the people I've dealt with...the last few years, always, I think maybe what they're trying to do is get me to be able to solve my own problem. But, I really don't ask them frivolously, and by the time I ask them, I really need help. And I haven't really felt I've had a really solid type response, you know, lately...I find that frustrating.

A fourth aide expressed some hesitation about working with advisors. She said, "I really don't have too much to do with EDC. I don't know many of the people." When asked if she would like to work more with EDC advisors, she indicated that she preferred to work with people she knew well. Another aide made a similar comment about her reluctance to have "people she doesn't know in the classroom."

Two aides offered constructive suggestions about the advisory process. One said that advisors should tell what they have to offer. The other said that it would help if she could see advisors work with children... "If we're having a problem, it's really easy for someone else to tell you how to solve that problem. But, if they come in and show you with the children, it really makes it a lot better."

Specific -- The current EDC advisor to Burlington was mentioned and praised by four aides. The aide who said she had resisted the new advisor also said she appreciated his candor in telling her that he felt she was being defensive. Another mentioned that he had been a great help in observing and commenting on the room. A

third commented on his observational skills with, "I think a person who comes in like that can tell you more than you see yourself--it's great." A fourth aide contrasted his style of advising to others'; she said:

> I find that (current advisor) is one of the few people in the world who can come in the room and criticize me right and left and I can take it. I really do not like people coming in the room saying, 'You should do this and you should do that.' I just feel...'you haven't been here. You don't know these kids.'...every time he says something (I think) 'oh yeah. Why didn't I think of that--of course.' It's a nice way of telling you what to do, and usually really helpful.

Previous advisors were also mentioned in positive ways by four aides. One was liked because he got right in with the children at their level and didn't stand around waiting. Another advisor was helpful to an aide on problems with first-second grade combinations. Two early advisors to Burlington were mentioned by another aide. She said they always seemed to be able to give her a really solid answer. Another aide said that one of these advisors had been helpful with her math program, showing her different ways of teaching math.

Question Asked:

2. <u>I'd like to know about ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside the classroom</u>:

   (a) Have you ever attended a summer workshop in (community) with an advisor?

   (b) Have you attended any workshops during the year with an advisor?

(c) Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?

(d) Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?

(e) Are there any other ways you have worked with an EDC advisor outside the classroom? What are they?

If yes to any of the above: Have you found working with advisors outside the classroom helpful to your work?

If no to all of the above: Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom? What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with other aides outside the classroom?

The responses to these questions were difficult to report because some aides had opposite responses to the same workshops. In addition, the number of workshops most aides had attended in Burlington was large enough that they could really only sort out their opinions about recent workshops. Thus, some talked about workshops in general and others talked about specific workshops.

Although some of the confusion may have resulted from the phrasing of the questions, part of the lack of clarity in responses seemed to reflect genuine differences of opinion. One aide set out some reasons for such differences in explaining why she thought workshops were not always helpful to her.

> I know it's hard for the (EDC advisors) to plan a group type thing to start with...even if they do get the responses (to questionnaires about what teachers and aides want in workshops), and I'm sure lots of time they don't--people don't even bother to fill in the forms. Why, how can they adjust to the needs of say, 30 people. What

> one finds really desperate another one doesn't want any part of. And I think some of the teachers have been here for several years. Certainly their needs aren't going to be like a first-year teacher's.

Her belief that people's needs would be quite different is borne out by other responses.

Summer Workshops

Ten aides responded to the questions about summer workshops -- Five aides said that they found these workshops helpful. Five aides said some were helpful--some were not. Six aides specifically mentioned the most recent summer workshop in which a consultant had worked with them on arranging classroom space. This workshop provides the best available example of different opinions, since three aides indicated that they had liked it and three said they did not. One of the aides who liked it said she had learned a lot from the space workshop. Another was less enthusiastic, saying she had listened to what was said but that her room was already pretty well arranged. The third said she had gotten lots of ideas from the workshop, such as building a loft for plants. She said, "A lot of teachers changed their rooms completely around after going to that workshop."

Taking the opposite position, one aide said that she had found the same workshop completely frustrating, that she had had no time to give it thought, and that it hadn't helped her one bit. Another said, "I wasn't satisfied with the workshop on space design. It

was good for design in the classroom, but I think too much (time) was spent on areas for activities and not enough on math and reading and things like that."

Four aides who did not comment specifically on the classroom space workshop had varied comments about workshop activities. One said that one workshop activity that involved looking at slides from another EDC Follow Through site had not been helpful because she needed things related to Burlington. Another said she found game-type activities, in which participants had to form groups, to be frustrating. She added, however, that she felt some of them had been useful, as when a game with Indians and Chiefs had helped the staff communicate better. She said that even then some people had thought the time could have been better spent getting things ready in their classrooms. Another aide said she had attended every workshop they had had and that she found them worthwhile. She especially liked being able to write down in advance which activity she wanted to attend.

Workshops During the School Year

One aide said that she found those workshops helpful. Another said she had attended them but couldn't remember specific ones. A third said that some were helpful and some were not, citing a workshop on record keeping which, she said, was not relevant to her because she was an aide and not a teacher. Another aide found the school-year workshops repetitious and said this caused people

to stop attending them. The fifth aide who commented on school-year workshops said she had gone to quite a few the previous year that were for teachers, aides, and parents, on such topics as canning and needlepoint. These, however, were not workshops run by EDC advisors.

Workshops at EDC in Boston

Five aides said that they had never attended a workshop at EDC in Boston. Five aides said that Boston workshops had been helpful to them. One aide did not find these workshops helpful. Three of the five aides who had never attended a Boston workshop said that they'd like to. Some had not been able to attend for personal reasons.

Workshops at EDC in Boston mentioned as having been helpful were on carpentry, record-keeping, parent involvement, aide certification, and how-to-keep-Follow-Through. One aide said:

> I've been down to EDC twice--I thought I got a lot out of it, but I do think that probably we've failed here, in that we haven't come back and shared it with people the way we should have because it's really not fair for maybe three or four people to get it and not share it. I think that's more or less self-defeating.

One aide who said she had gone to two workshops in Boston felt that the large group meetings there were a waste of her time and of EDC's money. She said they had seen a film together that had nothing to do with her class.

> I just felt very lost, wondering what I was doing there...Nothing seemed to be organized or planned and you were sort of on your own. And, if you didn't really know exactly where you were going- I just wanted something that would be of interest to me, that would involve me.

She went on to say that aides had been asked in advance to write down what they had wanted to do at the workshop but she guessed that so many people had written down different things that there had been no chance to plan for everything. In any case, she didn't get to do anything she had written down. She said that when she approached advisors for help they always seemed to be involved with someone or something else and told her they'd get around to her but then never did. She was quite disappointed by this because she had been to a workshop at the EDC Follow Through site in Philadelphia where she felt very much involved.

Individual Conferences

In asking this question, we were not clear enough in describing what we meant by an "individual conference." As a result, six aides did not respond to the question. One aide said she had not had any individual conferences. Four aides said that they had. One thought she had been in such a conference when the teacher-aide pairings were first being established. Another had talked with an advisor about a problem with her own child. The fourth aide said that she and the teacher she worked with had talked with EDC advisors about what the advisors had observed in their classroom.

Some of the aides who did not respond to the question had previously talked about similar conferences in connection with classroom observations. This seemed to indicate that more than four aides have met with EDC advisors individually or in small groups, but did not think of those meetings as "individual conferences."

Other Ways of Working with EDC Advisors

Only one aide responded to this question, which was designed to allow for additional comments. She said that she had attended a summer workshop at the Philadelphia EDC Follow Through site. She liked the opportunity to get acquainted with the other Burlington people she was traveling with, since they had not worked together before. At the workshop there were lots of different things going on and she kept very busy. She added that it was better organized than some workshops she had been to since.

Other Ways You Would Like to Work with EDC Advisors

Only one aide offered suggestions for other kinds of work she'd like advisors to do. She hoped that advisors might encourage principals to spend more time in the classrooms. She also wanted some help with weaving and wanted advisors to help her and others to deal with parents better, because she felt that only the middle class parents were involved in her school.

General Opinions about Workshops

One aide felt that advisors introduced new materials so

often that she didn't have time to get used to them before new ones were thrust upon her. She said she hated to go to a new workshop because she hadn't yet incorporated what she had learned from the last one. She also wanted workshops that were more structured so that people would know beforehand what was available.

A second aide echoed the desire to know in advance more about what advisors had to offer, while a third felt she did know what advisors were doing and could get a lot out of workshops. One aide mentioned an incident in a workshop when she felt the advisors had gotten into problems with each other that marred the workshop.

Question Asked:

3. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do? (with yourself and with others). How do they usually respond?

Aide-Advisor Communication

Five of the nine aides who responded to this question said that they wrote their wishes for advisor services on a sheet that was circulated before advisor visits. One said the teacher she worked with filled it in and another said that at least once she had just written that she'd do what the teacher wanted. Another said she had written requests in the past, but would contact the project director now. Two other aides also said they would make requests for advisor services through the project director. The remaining two aides said that they would ask or tell the EDC

advisor directly what they wanted.

One of the aides who said she spoke directly with advisors said that she was very outspoken and would just go up and tell advisors what she thought. The aide who said she wrote that she would do what the teacher wanted explained that she saw the classroom as the responsibility of the teacher and that things should run her way. She added that there had to be a certain amount of agreement between teachers and aides on goals and that it was essential that advisors be told what people wanted: "I think for the most part you've got to tell them. They can't possibly get around to that many classrooms and see what every individual needs."

Advisor Response to Requests

Nine aides seemed quite pleased with advisors' response to requests. Some of the comments included (paraphrased):

-- Advisors don't shirk their duties.

-- Most are willing to give up their own time, beyond what they're scheduled for.

-- They've all really tried.

-- Every time she came she'd have something for us even if she wasn't going to be working with us that much on that particular visit...I'm sure on her part it must have taken loads of research.

-- The Career Development Committee asked for help in finding relevant courses and teachers (for aides). We got some help.

-- Anything we have asked for they have responded to.

9.10 and 9.11 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Three points deserving emphasis emerge from the responses of Burlington administrators to questions about their contact with EDC advisors: (1) a feeling of ease in communication; (2) the administrators' sense that the EDC advisors can help them personally in their work; (3) the belief that the program has become more mature, entailing a different relationship with EDC. The interviews gave the impression that all three Burlington administrators felt capable of expressing their views to people from EDC and confident that those views will be attended to. Two administrators mentioned making phone calls and the third said that he could have more contact with advisors if he did more to get it. Whatever problems exist between Burlington and EDC, they do not appear to be viewed as a result of poor communication.

Each of the administrators mentioned some way EDC advisors had responded to their needs, in addition to responding to the needs of teachers and others. The principals and project director apparently do not view EDC advisors solely as people to work with teachers, but also as people who can benefit administrators directly.

The project director and principal of the school where most Follow Through classes are located both expressed the belief that the EDC advisors are and should be functioning differently now than in previous years. The project director attributed this to the years of experience many teachers had with Follow Through.

The principal talked of the maturity of the program, implying that the needs of the program have changed and that EDC advisors had adjusted to that need.

9.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Questions Asked:

1. What have EDC advisors done with you. In general, have you found your work with EDC advisors helpful. Why or why not? Can you give me some examples? What else would you like to see advisors doing with you?

2. What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with others in the program? (Teachers, aides, parents, other administrators) Do you see these things as helpful in general? Why or why not? Can you give me some examples?

3. What difficulties have you had in general?

4. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do?

5. To what extent do you feel your needs and wishes for advisor activities and personnel have been or are being met by EDC? Can you give me some examples.

Because there are only three administrators in Burlington (the principals of both schools with Follow Through classes and the Follow Through Project Director), each person's responses will be reported separately.

Principal A

This principal said he did not have a great deal of contact with EDC advisors. He said this was alright with him since there is only one Follow Through class at his school, and he attributed part of the lack of contact to his own actions. He accepted the

subordination of his school to the other school, where the other ten Follow Through classes and the Follow Through office are located. He saw advisors as people who offer ideas to teachers but let the teachers work out problems for themselves. He said they listened well to the teachers and made useful suggestions, and he saw a "change of pace" in the school resulting from the advisors' work. An EDC advisor had put him in touch with a summer program on open education that he found very stimulating. He also said he has learned sbout child development from workshops run by EDC advisors.

This principal wished the EDC advisors could spend more time in his school. He also wanted them to "come on stronger" than they do saying they should be straighter and more forthright. He experienced some ambiguity concerning the role advisors are to play in the program. He felt that things would be smoother if there were more communication on both sides, particularly if advisors would spell out for him what they were planning to do each time they came. He felt that he could let advisors know what he'd like them to do either directly when they visit or by sending a message through the project director.

Principal B

The other principal had been more intensively involved with EDC advisors, since all of the K-3 classes in his school are Follow Through classes. He felt that there had been a change for the

better in the work of EDC advisors over the years. He said that the first year the advisors were "too laissez faire," stressing so-called creative things like working with tri-wall, but neglecting things like reading. One of these advisors, he said, had told teachers that children would learn to read when they were ready and didn't need help, which he felt had contributed to "chaos". He singled out a particular advisor as having turned the tide from "hubbub" to concentration on reading. Although he was just getting to know the current advisor, he expressed confidence in him. He said that the new advisor was meeting with teachers and aides, the PAC chairperson, and sometimes with the superintendent, and that this advisor was getting into in-depth work with teachers in their classrooms.

Regarding difficulties in working with EDC advisors, this principal said that he had asked for help in strengthening parent involvement but had not been satisfied with the work of the advisor. He felt that distance was not a problem because he could always 'phone EDC. Other ways he communicated with advisors were in writing and directly when the advisors visited. He said he felt EDC tries to respond to Burlington's needs and pointed out that Burlington Follow Through had asked to have the current advisor assigned to them. He thought Burlington now had a "mature" program, that people know what they need now, so that instead of letting EDC make all the decisions they now feel they can make demands and

expect EDC to respond to them.

Project Director*

The project director said that in the beginning EDC advisors had helped her understand what Follow Through was all about and that they had given her needed help in learning how to deal with the administrative aspects of her job. She had gone through the same training workshops as the teachers and found her trips to workshops in Boston very helpful. The workshops put her in touch with people from EDC she could call on and had exposed her to many new people from other programs. Recently, an important part of her contact with EDC advisors had been sitting down with them and the principal every month to talk about what had been happening. She felt this gave her information she needed in order to be able to support what was going on.

She saw advisors as helping teachers with things like room arrangement. She said that there were fewer workshops now for all the Follow Through staff because many teachers now felt they didn't need that kind of help since they have had it for several years. She did say, however, she felt that teachers wanted continued individual help. When asked about difficulties she has had in working with EDC advisors, she said that she had not really had many because she always felt free to call EDC when problems arose. She did say that she had not always been kept informed sufficiently about what advisors had been doing with teachers in the classroom.

*See page 30

She also mentioned that the frequent turnover of advisors had created some problems with continuity, though it had provided a nice variety of approaches. She said that she communicated with advisors by phone and by letter and that one of her jobs was to find out from teachers what kinds of input they would like from advisors and to communicate that to advisors before they came to Burlington. Responding to the question about how much EDC has succeeded in meeting her wishes, she said she felt that Burlington Follow Through had been spoiled in the beginning of the program by having a large amount of advisor help with just four teachers, implying that she would like to have more advisor time but sees that as impractical. She volunteered that EDC advisors have provided a useful service by doing some work with non-Follow Through teachers in the school, thereby helping to improve relations between Follow Through and non-Follow Through staff.

CHAPTER 10

SATISFACTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES OF WORKING IN FOLLOW THROUGH AS REPORTED BY BURLINGTON TEACHERS, AIDES, AND ADMINISTRATORS

10.1 INTRODUCTION

The questions reported in this chapter were designed to allow respondents to talk about aspects of their experience in the Follow Through program that they considered important but which we had not specifically asked about. In order to elicit statements about what it means to be a teacher, aide, or administrator in Follow Through, we asked all three groups to describe the greatest satisfactions and greatest difficulties they have experienced while working in the Follow Through Program.

Teachers and aides were asked what tips or suggestions they would give to a person considering entering the program. Aides were asked about the impact of their experiences as aides on their personal goals. We expected that the opportunity to become an aide and to work toward certification as a teacher would be significant to many of the aides, and we wanted to give them a chance to talk about that.

Administrators were asked specifically about EDC Follow Through, their opinions about its goals, and about the positive and negative aspects of EDC Follow Through in their community. We hoped these questions would fit the perspectives of

administrators who had responsibilities for whole programs or schools.

10.2 OVERALL SUMMARY OF TEACHER, AIDE, AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The major source of satisfaction for members of all three groups was the opportunity to work with other people in the program, especially the children, teachers, and parents. Teachers also appreciated the extra resources they had, both human and monetary. Aides were pleased to be able to work in classrooms and many were glad they could take courses toward certification as teachers. The administrators expressed strong agreement with EDC's goals. In general the difficulties cited had more to do with the usual problems of working in a school than with the Follow Through program per se.

10.3 OVERALL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The teachers, aides, and administrators in Burlington viewed Follow Through as highly beneficial to them and to the children. This was indicated most clearly by the fact that many of the satisfactions described by respondents were attributed to Follow Through, while most of their difficulties were not seen as consequences of the Follow Through program.

10.4 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Teachers emphasized their satisfaction with the number and

quality of the adults available to help them and the extra money they had for supplies and materials. They found these added resources helpful in their work. Most of the satisfactions they mentioned resulted from the Follow Through program, but many of the people they named as helping in their work were employed by the school system, not by Follow Through. The difficulties cited were more varied, including such problems as lack of time for planning, trouble with discipline, red tape, getting used to open classroom teaching, and differences in philosophy among staff members. The tips teachers said they would share with new teachers entering Follow Through included specific suggestions about the school and the Follow Through program, information about the EDC approach and the relationship of teachers to EDC, and the qualifications required of Follow Through teachers.

10.5 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

The responses to these questions did not reveal any facts or opinions not touched on in other parts of the interview. Teachers generally restated themes that had appeared before. The overall impression from these responses is that Follow Through has had a distinct and beneficial impact on these teachers. They expressed satisfaction with many of the parts of the program, and most of their difficulties were the kinds of things that might cause problems in any case, not problems created by the Follow Through program.

10.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through teacher?

The eleven Burlington teacher responses suggested three general categories: adults as resources, money for different materials and activities, and other satisfactions. Teachers' descriptions of their greatest satisfactions varied in detail and emphasis. The "other" category will be described first, because these satisfactions were often stated first.

Other

The satisfactions paraphrased below give a sense of the variation in content, detail, and emphasis.

-- It happens about 300 times a day that I'm satisfied--almost always it happens with the kids.

-- Before Follow Through, every child had a workbook. I hated that and am grateful that Follow Through came here.

-- Right now, the atmosphere gives me the most satisfaction. Autonomy within the classroom -- to organize and do what I feel is really important.

-- Health, dental, nutrition: Follow Through helps kids in this neighborhood.

-- The change that I've seen in the children within my own classroom and being where I want to be.

Adults as Resources

Seven teachers mentioned adults as resources. The most experienced teachers in Follow Through did not mention adults as resources. Two teachers with one or two years of experience in Follow Through mentioned adult resources after stating their other satisfactions. One said, "I'm extremely pleased with my classroom staff and with help from outside," and the other was pleased with "dealing with people who work well together and like each other." Two teachers with less teaching experience but a longer relationship with Follow Through also mentioned the importance of other adults as resources.

Three of the four teachers with one to two years of teaching experience and in their first year with Follow Through emphasized their satisfaction with the adults who were available to them as resources. One said, "The aide is the biggest difference and greatest satisfaction." The other talked about the help she had received from a consultant brought in by the EDC advisors. She said her greatest satisfaction was:

> Being pushed in areas I want to be pushed into. For example (the consultant) encouraged me to put a monster corner in the class and approach math and science through monsters. (She also encouraged me to) get a cubby space built...Having other adults to share responsibility in the classroom; working together and seeing how many ideas you can come up with together--more than working alone.

The third teacher mentioned the adults who work in the learning center in the school and others with special expertise in reading.

Money for Different Materials and Activities

The response of four teachers fits in this category. One experienced teacher stressed items in this category. She expressed satisfaction with

> "the kinds of things we have been able to do, such as taking more trips with youngsters which gives them more experiences and using the kinds of materials the program has been able to choose and buy."

Three other teachers mentioned money for supplies, after stating other satisfactions.

Question Asked:

2. What are your greatest difficulties as a Follow Through teacher?

Burlington teachers' greatest difficulties in Follow Through focus on the dimensions of time, discipline, red tape, getting used to open education, and differences in philosophy.

Time

Four teachers indicated that more time for planning and preparation was needed in an open situation than in a formal classroom:

-- Always more to do than you have time for.

-- In being so individualized--hard to keep on top of what everybody is doing--tiring.

-- It's a lot harder; it really is. But again, more satisfying.

-- My greatest difficulty is feeling guilty that I don't spend more time when the kids aren't here...but I made up my mind that my family is too important.

Discipline

Two teachers cited discipline as a continuing, daily difficulty.

Red Tape

Two teachers felt that red tape and other extra things to do were their greatest difficulties. One mentioned that Follow Through requires turning in monthly records on classroom activities and children, attending extra meetings, and making extra parent contacts. The other teacher said, "paper work...like special forms to get a bus...complicated forms for petty cash -- seems like things could be a little easier."

Getting Used to Open Education

Two teachers felt that getting used to open education was

their greatest difficulty. One teacher said, "Getting accustomed to all the services and having so many people in the classroom... (at first) I found myself being defensive in front of the aide and student teacher. I don't find myself being defensive now." The other was less specific; she said, "Getting started the first year, and each year you have to make a lot of changes...But I feel I can handle more with each year of experience." Getting used to open education was these teachers' greatest initial difficulty of working in Follow Through but both seem to feel that this difficulty has subsided with experience.

Differences in Philosophy

Three teachers felt that differences in philosophy was a great problem, although all three spoke from different perspectives. One teacher felt that team teaching was frustrating when both teachers weren't equally influenced by the EDC approach. Another felt that working with the administration was hard when there were conflicting philosophies about education. The third teacher, one with considerable experience in working with EDC Follow Through, was uncomfortable anticipating increasing demand for accountability. She said, "I see us moving in that direction. I really don't know what to do -- I would like very much to get some help in understanding more about it."

One teacher's response which didn't fit in any of the categories, said her greatest difficulty was working with the

extreme needs of some children in her classroom. She felt they brought fears and personal difficulties to the classroom which were hard to cope with.

Question Asked

3. If you were talking to another teacher who was considering entering the Follow Through program, what are some tips or ideas you would want to share?

Burlington teachers responded to this question in essentially three ways: (a) comments on the EDC Follow Through approach and the relationship of teachers to it, (b) qualifications for teachers entering Follow Through, and (c) specific suggestions. In general, the teachers with the most Follow Through experience talked most about the relationship of teachers to Follow Through, while teachers with one or two years of Follow Through experience tended to talk about qualifications for Follow Through teachers and specific suggestions.

Teacher Relationship to Follow Through

The four teachers with three to five years of Follow Through experience offered similar general hints for new teachers, although with different emphases. One teacher related that many new teachers believe open education means to let the child do whatever he or she wants to do. She said this misconception has caused problems

in the school and that someone should help new teachers to understand what EDC's approach really means. "There should be a philosophy of Follow Through, a few aims - how to go about this kind of thing."

Another experienced teacher emphasized the advisory role of EDC. She said she always tells new teachers not to get the idea that EDC is dictating.

> The biggest lesson that I learned is that EDC is here to advise - which is what they're called, advisors. We may take what we can use, and, hopefully, get as close to the open classroom as we can get, but every teacher has to teach the best way for her or she's not going to be a good teacher.

The third teacher made a similar point, saying that she would want to reassure a new teacher that there are many ways to teach an open classroom and what is most important is that the teacher feel comfortable with her method.

> People do feel that aura about both Follow Through and EDC -- that this means someone is going to tell them to be something other than what they are.

The fourth teacher said, "Do what you're most comfortable doing", which, she said, meant not copying other classrooms but changing gradually in your own way.

One first-year teacher said that she would advise a new Follow Through teacher that her classroom could be as individualized as she wanted to make it.

Qualifications for Teachers Entering Follow Through

One first-year Follow Through teacher was most explicit about qualifications. She said she would want to ask whether the teacher believes in starting children where they are and bringing them through various avenues to academic learning. She would also ask whether the teacher objects to parent feedback or visitors in the classroom, because both have to be expected in Follow Through. "If you believe that children learn through experience, as Piaget does, then definitely go to Follow Through."

Another teacher said that she couldn't think of any specific tips but that anyone who would work hard would like working in Follow Through. Another teacher said that she wouldn't ever think of suggesting EDC Follow Through unless the person was a high caliber teacher. She said she would want to know, "Is that person really able to do this job well? We have to have the best over here, the best."

Specific Suggestions

One experienced Follow Through teacher said that she would remind new teachers how beneficial it is to have an aide, health benefits for children, supplies and materials.

A second teacher said she'd tell a new teacher rules that aren't written down, such as where to find things in the school and which people are helpful for what things.

Two teachers talked about developing relaxed relationships with parents, having a sense of humor in the classroom and making use of the extra resources provided for Follow Through teachers.

10.7 SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

The major satisfactions mentioned by aides came from their work with children and from their relationships with teachers. Several aides could name no difficulties and some mentioned difficulties they said no longer existed. Current difficulties cited included time demands, problems with finding babysitters, and the general difficulty of being an aide rather than a teacher. All the aides who were asked the question said that being an aide had made a difference in their personal goals. Some aides said they planned to become certified teachers, others talked about being able to understand their own children better as a result of their experience in Follow Through. Most of the tips offered for prospective aides had to do with ways of getting along in the program.

10.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

The aides expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their opportunity to work in classrooms. Only one aide said she felt tension related to being a paraprofessional. This is surprising since the aide role is a relatively new one in public schools and tensions could be expected about what aides should and should not do and how they should be treated.

10.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

Question Asked:

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through aide?

All eleven Burlington aides responded to this question. Many mentioned several satisfactions. Seven aides mentioned working and being with children. Five aides mentioned working with and being with teachers.

Of the seven aides who mentioned working and being with children, four felt that seeing children learn was a great satisfaction. One aide mentioned that it was especially satisfying to see a child, who had been having a hard time, beginning to achieve over the year's time. Another aide felt that living in the same neighborhood with the children and knowing them well added a dimension to her satisfaction in seeing children learn. In addition one aide said that she enjoyed helping a child know that he/she is worth something. Another aide enjoyed sharing her real-life understanding of the feelings some children hold.

Five aides mentioned their satisfaction with working and being with teachers. One spelled out the contrast between the kind of communication teachers and aides have now, as compared with the situation in the past. She said, "Teachers really do not have a feeling (now) that you're an aide and I'm a teacher." She continued, saying that there used to be a lot of tension because, for example, there was only a teachers' room, but no place for aides, and aides were not included at staff meetings. Several aides told the teachers that some decisions about the aides' role in Follow Through had to be made. These issues do not seem to cause difficulty at this time.

One aide elaborated on the satisfactions she experienced working in Follow Through. These are paraphrased below.

-- The way the project director listens and helps with problems.

-- My own learning.

-- Being able to do anything I want, because the people I've worked with have given me total freedom.

-- Being in contact with parents; a parent told me she really learned a lot from me about kids even though she has four children of her own--I almost cried.

-- Feeling so wanted; it's so great for the morale.

-- Not being home with nothing to do.

-- All the opportunities for adults, like workshops and

advisors who will sit down and talk with you, are great satisfactions.

Question Asked:

2. What are your greatest difficulties as a Follow Through aide?

Of the eleven Burlington aides, five said that they neither had nor knew of any difficulties.

Two aides mentioned going home tired some nights but enjoying it and getting some great ideas for things which could be done at home but not having the time to do them all.

Two aides mentioned difficulties they had experienced in the past. During her first year of teaching in Follow Through, one aide remembered that she was tense because there were unclear expectations about what aides were supposed to do. As mentioned earlier, another aide felt that there used to be a problem about the aides' role in the school and communication between teachers and aides.

Current difficulties experienced by aides in Follow Thorugh included getting babysitters for their own children and getting proper credit for completed college courses. An on-going difficulty mentioned was "being an aide rather than a teacher." If an aide doesn't feel that she gets credit for the things she does in the classroom, the teachers's role seems more desirable than being an aide.

Question Asked:

3. Have your experiences as an aide in Follow Through made any changes in your personal goals? What kinds?

Six of the eleven Burlington aides answered, "yes," to this question. The comments of those aides are summarized in the following table.

Number of Comments	Changes in Personal Goals
3	Want to go on for certification as a teacher.
2	Understand their own children better.
1	Wants to go on in paraprofessional education.
1	Experienced emotional change for better.

Of the three aides who said that they now wanted to go on for certification as teachers, one aide said that she hoped to go on in school and get enough credits to teach. Particularly, she wanted to work with children who aren't able to attend school. Another aide also said that she would continue working towards teacher certification and that she wanted to specialize in working with children who have speech problems. A third aide said she found herself interested in working with kindergarten children. She previously had felt that there wasn't much to do in kindergarten, but now has found many areas of interest. She said she hoped to go to school full-time after

Follow Through and get certified.

Of the two aides who felt they understood their own children better, one aide said, "I think they've (the Follow Through children) helped me a great deal with my home life...It's helped me to understand (my own child)." The other aide said she uses her new - found understanding of children with her own children. She said that she's now more interested in her children's work and can help them with problems. She added that she's learned not to compare one child with another and is no longer a nagging mother.

Before her experiences in Follow Through, one aide said she wouldn't have thought about taking courses or going on with higher education. Now she wants to continue her education, particularly for certification as a paraprofessional.

None of the aides who responded to this question mentioned negative changes due to Follow Through experiences; half mentioned enhanced career goals and the other half discussed changed personal attitudes and behavior.

Question Asked

4. What tips or ideas would you share with a new Follow Through aide?

All eleven Burlington aides responded to this question. At least four perspectives were illustrated by their responses. Two aides prefaced their remarks by saying that they had advised other mothers on how to become an aide. Four aides talked about a prospective aide's attitudes. Seven aides offered specific

suggestions for a new Follow Through aide while five aides gave general advice.

Attitudes:

Four aides began their comments with a phrase like, "I would see if she...." This suggested that meeting with a new aide would also involve observing to see if she measured up to certain standards. Three aides felt it was important to see if a new aide really wanted to work with children, not just to work for the money. Another aide would see if the new aide tried to get along with other people in the classroom and was able to talk things out with the teacher.

Specific Suggestions:

Seven aides had specific suggestions to offer to a new aide. The comments that follow are paraphrased.

-- Attend staff meetings to know what's going on and where to get help.

-- Have conferences with the teacher you're working with.

-- Listen to the teacher and do what they want.

-- If you want to be on your own -- work with so-and-so.

-- It's helpful to take a course on working certain kinds of machines, like a movie projector. You should also try to match courses you take with the ideas of the teacher you work with, because some courses teach "the exact opposite of what your own teacher wants you to do."

-- Tell her about how the program works. When you first come into Follow Through, the children seem to be playing. However, the more you watch and work with the children, the more you can see how they learn.

In speaking about EDC, one aide said, "Don't even consider it different than any other place -- when you close the door you're allowed to teach any way you want...they're (advisors) no threat. They're there if you want them, they're there if you need them, but you don't have to feel that they're keeping a thumb over you."

General Advice:

Several aides offered general advice to a new Follow Through aide

-- Keep an open mind and don't be afraid of criticism.

-- You've got to enjoy working with children; the money's good, but you've still got to like children.

-- Be prepared to make mistakes, because everybody does.

-- Feel comfortable here; everyone gets along.

-- "Just do it. It's a lot of fun...very educational too, just to see how things have changed from my time...I think children enjoy (school): if I was a little girl again, I would enjoy Follow Through -- so many things to do."

10.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Burlington administrators expressed satisfaction with working with the parents and staff in Follow Through and supporting a variety of teaching styles. The difficulties mentioned by one principal were not directly related to Follow Through. The other principal and the project director* both saw working with each other as a major difficulty. One principal and the project director explained EDC's goals as improving children's

*See page 30

learning and involving parents in the school. Both shared these goals. The other principal felt EDC had not stated clear goals. All three administrators saw EDC Follow Through as a positive force in their schools.

10.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Introducing the role of project director in a school can create difficulties. Misunderstanding and conflict can occur until clear guidelines are established to distinguish between the responsibilities of the project director and those of the principal. The likelihood of such conflict suggests that regular communication between principals and project directors is essential to successful functioning in both roles.

The administrators seemed to agree strongly with what they saw as EDC's goals. In fact, their responses indicate that they have been working toward similar goals themselves. Burlington administrators' agreement with EDC's goals helps to explain why they see EDC advisors as helpful to them in their jobs (see Chapter 9).

10.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Question Asked

1. What have been your greatest satisfactions as an administrator in Follow Through?

2. What have been your greatest difficulties as an administrator in Follow Through?

Project Director*

The project director's greatest satisfaction was, "getting to know the parents and making them feel this is their school." Her greatest difficulty was being located in one of the two Follow Through schools. She pointed out that when a Follow Through program operates in several schools, the director is less of a threat to the principals. Her situation was difficult, she said, because ten of the eleven Follow Through classrooms were located in one school. She added that her role has been easier since the second school was added to the program because now she has two different principals to work with.

Principals

One of the two Burlington principals said that his greatest satisfaction in Follow Through was providing some alternatives in the school. He said that the whole school isn't standardized. Some classrooms are quiet, teacher-directed, and taught by the plan book method; other classrooms were individualized, encouraging students in a number of directions. Some classrooms were formal; other classrooms worked on a first name basis.

For this principal, difficulties were harder to articulate. He mentioned three problems. One was communication. He found it hard to communicate, in educational terms, what his school is about and how it is different from schools thirty years ago. He elaborated, saying that some people who are vocal against open

*See page 30

education, and schools in general, carry with them the failures they experienced in schools. In reaction to their failures, some parents think schools ought to be like they were thirty years ago, because that educational style had made some people successful, and they want their children to be successful by past standards. This principal felt that he was not completely capable of conveying how and why educational views have changed to such parents.

A second problem that this principal described involved his many roles. He has found it difficult to act the many roles a principal is expected to assume. For example, he mentioned the difficulty of being viewed as a father-figure. The third problem this principal expressed was with change: in his opinion, it just was not happening fast enough.

The other principal said that he would have to restate the question to encompass more than Follow Through--he talked about his greatest satisfactions as principal in the whole school. He said that working with the parents and teachers in his school was his greatest satisfaction: "To work in this school you have to have a real gut level attitude about the school. The parents, teachers, administrators--everyone is real... There's always been something extra about this school and the community."

The principal said his greatest difficulty as principal has been working with the project director.* He has met with the director and others to iron out some of the problems, but not all

*See page 30

the problems have been resolved. He added, "I try to understand what makes me tick." None of this has been easy for him, however, he said, "One thing I say to people is that we're not perfect, but we're trying as best as we know how to work with kids and help kids."

Question Asked

3. In your opinion, what has the EDC Follow Through Program tried to accomplish? Do you share those goals? Why or why not? Do you feel those goals are being accomplished? Why or why not?

Project Director*

The project director responded to those questions by describing EDC advisor activities that she felt indicated EDC's priorities. The broadest type of activity she mentioned was working with teachers. She noted that EDC advisors differed in the degree to which they kept in touch with Burlington teachers. She spoke of one advisor who wrote detailed records on classroom visits and sent materials to teachers to help them act on suggestions. Part of working with teachers, according to the project director, has been trying to arrange in-service training time for teachers. She felt this goal had not yet been accomplished.

The other area of emphasis the project director mentioned was working with parents. She said that an EDC advisor who had worked in Burlington recently had worked extensively with parents, and that this had been EDC's first major effort at working with

*See page 30

parents in Burlington.

Principals

One Burlington principal described various broad goals EDC was trying to accomplish, all of which he shared. He said his conception of goals came from observing EDC advisors at the school, word-of-mouth, and from reading various EDC handouts. This principal saw EDC as having a broad goal of getting "teachers to think, talk, and read about child development, the learning process, self-image, and using the real world to teach kids things rather than the vicarious world of 'see Spot run'". He felt that EDC was trying to get teachers to see students as human beings with particular cognitive and affective needs. He saw the thrust of the program as more to help a child develop than "make him suffer through memorizing ABC's". Given this broad set of concerns about teachers, the principal felt that a concrete goal of EDC was trying to get a variety of manipulative materials into the classroom.

This principal also mentioned the goal of getting adults in the community to like being in the school building. He believed in reducing adults' fears about school and helping to work out relationships between parents and principals and teachers that reflect the human element, rather than perpetuate the idea that school people are "employed by the State to mete out punishments for failure." In line with decreasing fear towards school, he added that EDC was involved in getting community people to

participate in planning and decision-making in the schools.

Another goal this principal mentioned was to "make school a place to learn, a place where you have success, a place where people say nice things to you."

The other Burlington principal felt that it had been difficult to get EDC to describe its goals. He said he had read EDC leaflets and books on the "integrated day." People had explained that the program is related to the British Infant School. However, he said he had never really understood what the program is and "maybe the only way to know is to live with it for awhile."

Questions Asked:

4. What do you see as the most positive aspects of EDC Follow Through in Burlington?

5. How about the other side? Are there also negative aspects to EDC Follow Through? What are they?

Project Director *

The project director had visited other Follow Through programs and had come to realize that

> "We really do have a good thing going. We have good people who just care about kids and are really doing a good job in the classrooms and outside."

She said EDC had helped by making teachers feel good about themselves, helping kindergarten and primary grade teachers to coordinate reading activities with each other, and getting teachers to

*See page 30

help each other, for example, in teacher-run workshops. She doubted that these things would have happened without EDC.

> "We would never have taken the time as a total staff to get together and really just find out what other people are doing or coordinate each other's work."

Principals

One Burlington principal said that the most positive aspects of EDC Follow Through were raising educational (cognitive and affective) achievements, and helping teachers change towards helping kids with "more than...sermons outlined by some publisher." This principal couldn't think of any really negative aspects of the program, although he added that anyone involved with change makes others uncomfortable, but that isn't especially negative.

The other principal mentioned several things he felt were positive aspects of the program: people he's had contact with, workshops, some of the trips to EDC in Newton.

On the other side of the coin, he was disturbed at not having enough time to develop the school program and the EDC program. This principal felt that federal budget cuts would probably curtail the program.

CHAPTER 11

WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER FOLLOW THROUGH LEAVES BURLINGTON: OPINIONS OF BURLINGTON TEACHERS, AIDES, AND ADMINISTRATORS

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The basic question reported in this chapter is how the current Follow Through schools in Burlington would be affected by the termination of the Follow Through program. Respondents were asked to give their opinions about what would be missing when the program ended and what would remain. This question was directed to the focal issue of this research study: how do the people in Burlington Follow Through view the impact of the EDC advisory approach?

11.2 OVERALL SUMMARY OF TEACHER, AIDE, AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

There was general agreement that the most important element of the Follow Through program that would be missing after the program ended was the extra money for materials, trips, medical services, and most important, for aides. There was, however, widespread agreement that open classrooms would continue after the Follow Through program ended.

11.3 OVERALL ANALYSIS OF TEACHER, AIDE, AND ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

This question revealed what many respondents considered to be the most important aspects of the Follow Through program, namely, the aides and the open classroom approach. The feeling that open

classrooms will continue to function after Follow Through ends is an encouraging indication that one of the major goals of EDC Follow Through is being accomplished in Burlington.

11.4 SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Teachers mentioned both material and non-material things that they thought would be missing after Follow Through ended. They spoke of the end of extra money for materials, trips, dental care, health care, lunches, and especially for aides. They also talked about missing EDC's help in implementing open education and shielding them from pressures to return to traditional approaches. When asked what would remain, the most common response was that a new style of teaching and the "spirit" of Follow Through would continue to exist. Some teachers also pointed out that some of the materials purchased through Follow Through would remain.

11.5 ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Many of the teachers expressed confidence that one of the major EDC Follow Through goals would have been accomplished, i.e., the approach to learning introduced by EDC would continue to be practiced after the program was terminated. This seems significant in view of the recognition that termination of the program would end the EDC advisors' support for teachers both in classrooms and in relations with parents and administrators. A teacher's belief that the principal would preserve the open quality of the school

is particularly encouraging.

11.6 DETAIL OF TEACHER RESPONSE

Question Asked:

When Follow Through leaves Burlington, how will that affect the program for children in your school? What will be missing? What will remain?

What will be missing:

Teachers mentioned several kinds of material resources that they felt would be missing after the Follow Through program leaves. Five teachers said they felt that money for materials and trips would become less available. Two teachers felt that the medical and dental program would be adversely affected. The snack program was mentioned by two teachers, and two others spoke of the free lunch program.

Non-material aspects of the program were stressed in Burlington teacher responses to this question. Four teachers mentioned that they will no longer have aides in the classroom when Follow Through leaves. One teacher said that without aides there will be twice as much work and less flexibility and mobility. Moreover, "aides are people you can talk with." Another teacher said that aides made it possible to have two adults in the classroom. She felt that "without an aide, the individualized program will be affected."

Two teachers mentioned EDC's reminders on open education as something that would be missing when Follow Through leaves.

> If it weren't for EDC coming and urging me to do some of the things I feel I'd like to do, I think I'd give in more to ... more traditional way of doing things ...

One teacher said that she thought some people would go back to the old way of solving problems.

> I don't know how totally committed everyone here on the staff is to open education. I see things that make me worry that when Follow Through goes out, open education will too. Like putting in a limited curriculum for the school and check lists for kids' accomplishments.

One teacher said that advisors had been safeguards for teachers against pressure from administration and parents. "Administration gets pressure from parents who fear that kids won't have the same curriculum if they move (out of this area)."

Other non-material things which teachers say they feel will be missing include: (1) freedom to work as a separate program (Follow Through) and sometimes to work outside the rules of the general administration and (2) parent/community activities. Four teachers used the adjectives "sad" and "bad" to describe their feelings about the Follow Through program leaving their school. One of these teachers expanded on those feelings, saying,

> I get a little angry with the government when I think why did they even start a program like this if they're going to stop it. It doesn't seem like they're being loyal.

What will remain:

Four teachers mentioned that materials already purchased would remain, things like the oven, sand and water tables, books and hands-on materials. One teacher mentioned that the hot lunch program would remain since the public schools in Burlington have now begun to serve hot lunches to all children. The items mentioned above were material resources of the program. Most of the teachers responses, however, centered on philosophy, teaching styles, and friendships.

Six teachers mentioned that the open philosophy and style of teaching would remain. Another said that the "spirit" of Follow Through would remain: "Open education won't die." One teacher said, "I don't think we'll ever go back to the rigidness of the old teaching." Another teacher thought that individualized teaching would continue because the idea is supported by her principal. Other things which teachers felt would continue were: friendships of aides and teachers, knowledge on how to scrounge materials, and welcome for parents in the school.

Two teachers made detailed statements about their hopes for the long-range effects from Follow Through. One said she hoped that

there would be little turnover on the staff and that those who had been in Follow Through for some time would remain firm in their open philosophy, teaching style and attitudes so that they could continue with this approach even after the Follow Through program ended. The second teacher felt the same way about the teachers who were there and the importance of their staying in the school. She also hoped that the principal would stay because he was supporting the extension of open education ideas throughout the school and he had fought for those ideas in the past. She added that she chose to come to this school because of the way it functions and works to meet the children's needs.

11.7 SUMMARY OF AIDE RESPONSE

Aides felt that ancillary services, such as medical and dental care, would be missing, along with extra money for materials and trips. The benefit of Follow Through mentioned most often was the practice of having aides in each of the classrooms. Most of the aides who mentioned this said lack of aides would limit the amount of attention children received. Aides said that some equipment and materials would remain after Follow Through left and they felt that parent involvement would continue to be high. Four aides made strong statements in support of their feeling that open classrooms would continue.

11.8 ANALYSIS OF AIDE RESPONSE

There was clearly a good deal of enthusiasm for the practice of having aides in the classroom. There might have been even more comments about the prospective loss of aides' jobs if this question had not been asked just after the question "Have your experiences as an aide in Follow Through made any changes in your personal goals?" (See Chapter 10) Some aides may have felt that they did not need to say any more at that point about how important their jobs were to them personally as well as to the program. It is impressive that five aides were concerned primarily with how the children would be affected by having less adult attention available in the classroom. The statements in support of open classrooms were also impressive. At least some aides believe the open classroom has been established in Burlington and will survive the termination of Follow Through.

11.9 DETAIL OF AIDE RESPONSE

Question Asked:

<u>When EDC Follow Through leaves Burlington, how will that affect the program for children in your school?</u>

<u>What will be missing:</u>

In talking about what will be missing when Follow Through leaves, five aides mentioned one or more of the ancillary services, dental and medical care, lunches and snacks, as things that would end with the Follow Through program. These services were seen as important for the children's well-being.

Two aides mentioned that the extra money for materials and trips would be missing. Two said they thought that open classrooms might not continue. Another aide said she thought it would be hard for children who had become used to open classrooms to adapt to conventional ones. One aide thought parent involvement would be affected. Another was sorry that they would no longer have a project director.

Six aides mentioned that they thought the school would no longer have aides in the classroom. They felt that it would be impossible for the teachers to give as much attention to each child with only one adult in the room, and thought it was unlikely that Burlington would provide the money needed to retain aides.

What will remain:

Five aides did not respond to the question about what will remain after the Follow Through program ends. Three aides mentioned equipment and materials. Three aides mentioned parent involvement, saying they hoped it would remain. Another aide was worried that the kind of parent organization that had existed long before the inception of Follow Through would return, offering only rummage sales and similar activities.

Four aides said they thought the open classroom approach to teaching would remain. Some of their statements follow:

> I think some of the teachers have gotten a strong feeling for an open classroom.

> The ways of teaching, I think, definitely will remain. The teachers that we have are good Follow Through teachers. And Follow Through to me isn't just the name of some government funds that have come in this way. To me it's that the teachers have learned that they've got other resources than themselves. And regardless of whether the program remains, the teachers will still have the knowledge of how to go for help outside the program. And I think they've brought that to Burlington. And the parents also have organized, so that I don't think you'll take that away. When you take the program away the PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization) will remain. The PAC (Policy Advisor Committee for Follow Through) funds may dwindle, but the PTO has organized themselves so that they know how to run the programs. They know how to help people, and they get a lot of benefit out of helping others. And I don't think that'll go. We really have a good group of parents who'd like to stick together.

> I think once you've taught with Follow Through you're going to try a lot harder to keep things that way. You may have to break your back doing it, but it's like getting yourself into a certain way of thinking ... and once you're in that way, you know, I find myself being a lot more resourceful ... like I look around and I see things. I look at things differently. And that will remain after Follow Through goes. So it's a whole different train of thought. It's just going to be a lot harder to do what you want to do, a lot harder.

11.10 SUMMARY OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The major aspect of Follow Through that the administrators felt would be missing when the program ends was the extra money

for ancillary services and for aides. The lack of money for aides was seen as the greatest hardship. All three administrators agreed that the educational program would continue, specifically that open classrooms would continue to exist after the program had ended.

11.11 ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

The belief of the two principals that open classrooms would outlive the Follow Through program seems quite significant. If they believe this to be true and if they continue to support open classrooms, then it is probable that Follow Through will have made a lasting impact on two Burlington schools.

11.12 DETAIL OF ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSE

Question Asked:

<u>When EDC Follow Through leaves Burlington, how will that affect the program for children in your school?</u>

<u>Project Director*</u>

The Project Director mentioned that in the area of medical and dental services, certain services like special eye examinations and free glasses will most likely be discontinued. Additional people under the auspices of EDC won't be available to help in classrooms. On the local project staff, the positions of project director and Follow Through secretary will no longer exist and this will leave many gaps in teacher services. The project director felt that aides would not be continued in each primary classroom. She

*See page 30

also felt that regarding the Follow Through parent coordinator, "We'll lose one good person who's been in touch with the parents, losing a lot of home visits."

On the other hand, the project director believed that many things introduced by Follow Through will remain in the school. Those items mentioned were: hot lunches which will be provided by Burlington; open classrooms - "We're going to do as much as we can. The school won't go back to the way it used to be because people like what they're doing and good things are happening"; the involvement of the community in the school, in the sense that people will continue to come in and volunteer and expose children to new things; and the general open atmosphere and feelings in the school.

Principals

One Burlington principal felt that medical-dental services and the lunch program may not be continued at his school; however, he would personally do his best to continue to pay attention to children's medical and dental needs through his own contacts. He was certain that the educational program would remain, since the child development concepts and the use of manipulative and concrete materials in the classroom were not tied to EDC only.

The other principal responded in detail about the effects of EDC Follow Through leaving Burlington. He said, "There is no way that we're going to be able to support the extra personnel or the extra services. Burlington cannot afford it." He felt that the

medical-dental and food programs would not be completely discontinued, but he also believed that they certainly would not be as good as the programs now in operation. He appreciated the current state of federal funding, but felt that a good program was running and it was frustrating that the program would be phased out..

The most important loss, according to this principal, would be the loss of the Follow Through aides. He felt that the aides were now well trained and some were more than competent enough to run their own classrooms. They would be cut out of the school program. He did feel, however, that although it would be difficult to implement the program without a project director and a parent coordinator, and with the need to use volunteers instead of regular aides, that the philosophy of education espoused by Follow Through would continue in his school.

APPENDICES

TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I. The first set of questions concerns your personal background.

1. Would you briefly describe your work experience before you came to this job?

   Probes: How many years have you lived in (community)?
   How long have you been a teacher?
   Have you had any jobs outside of education?
   What grades have you taught?

2. What is your educational background?

   Probes: What degree or degrees do you hold?
   Do you regularly take courses?
   Are you working toward a degree now?

3. How long have you been a teacher in Follow Through?

4. How long have you been at the _____ School?

5. How did you come to be a teacher in Follow Through?

II. Now I'd like to get an overview of your activities as a teacher.

1. Could you give me an idea of how you work in the classroom by describing what you do during a typical day? I'm interested in knowing what you did on your own, what you shared with the aide, and what was going on in the room. Starting with when you arrived, what did you do?

   Probes: What was the aide doing then?
   What were the children you weren't working with doing?
   What responsibilities did children assume?
   How did you decide what to do while children were involved in different activities?
   How do you handle disruptive behavior?

2. We would like to have a complete picture of what you do as a teacher.

   (a) Are there things you haven't mentioned that you often do?
   (b) Can you tell me more about how you work with your aide?

   Probe: Do you plan together?

3. Do you spend any time outside of class time on work related to your teaching?

   If yes: About how much?
   How do you spend that time?

   If no: (proceed)

4. What are the most important goals you are trying to accomplish in your teaching?

   Probe: Development

III. The next questions are about your views on children's learning. The first one is very broad.

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for children to be doing and learning in school during the early grades?

2. Which of the things you think children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?

3. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your classroom?

4. We're interested in your view of parent involvement. Do you feel parents should be involved in their children's school?

   If yes: In what ways?

   If no: Why not?

IV. Now I'd like to ask you about your opinions on the EDC approach to children's learning.

1. In your opinion, what has the EDC Follow Through program tried to accomplish?
   Do your share those goals? Why or why not?
   Do you feel those goals are being accomplished? Why or why not?

2. EDC Follow Through encourages open expression of children's needs and feelings in the classroom. Do you share this goal?

   If yes: What benefits do you see in open expression?
   Does open expression create any difficulties (for teacher, for children)?
   Do you encourage talk about things like sex, death, birth, race, and the fears children have?

   If no: What disadvantages do you see in open expression (for teachers, for children)?

3. EDC's Follow Through program stresses "building on children's interests" as a starting point for teaching. Do you agree with this principle?

   If yes: How does this work out in practice? First, how do you find out what a child's interests are? (examples)
   How do you build on those interests? (examples)

   If no: What do you consider the appropriate starting point for teaching?

4. EDC's Follow Through program emphasizes giving children a greater amount of choice in what they do. Is this one of your goals?

   If yes: What kinds of things do they make choices about?
   On what basis do they choose: whims, what friends are doing, genuine interests, etc.?
   How do you know when a choice is based on genuine interests?
   Do you help children choose? How?

   If no: What are your reasons?

5. EDC Follow Through encourages evaluating children's progress on the basis of their own abilities. Do you try to do this in your classroom?

   If yes: How do you diagnose a child's ability?
   How do you keep track of each child's progress?
   How do you share your evaluation of the child's progress with parents?

   If no: On what basis do you evaluate children's progress?

V. <u>The next section is about your contact with EDC advisors and your opinions on their work. You may want to make some distinctions among different advisors if you have worked with more than one.</u>

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

   If yes: Who usually initiates the contact?
   What do they usually do?
   What do you do while they are in the room?
   Have you found their work helpful?
   Can you give me some examples?
   Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in your classroom?

   If no: Would you like them to work in your classroom?
   What do you know about what they do in other teachers' classrooms?

2. I'd like to know about ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside the classroom.

   (a) Have you ever attended a summer workshop in (community) with an EDC advisor?

   (b) Have you ever attended a workshop during the year in (community) with an advisor?

   (c) Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?

   (d) Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?

   (e) Are there any other ways you have worked with an EDC advisor outside the classroom? What are they?

   If yes to any of the above:

   Which ways were most helpful?
   Would you like to be able to work with EDC advisors in other ways?
   What? Why?

   If no to all of the above:

   Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom?
   What do you know about what they have done with other teachers outside the classroom?

3. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do (with you or with others)?

   How do they usually respond?

4. When Follow Through leaves (community), how will that affect the program for children in your school?

   Probes: What will be missing?
   What will remain?

VI. The following questions are intended to give us an idea of how you as a teacher fit into the school as a whole. This will enable us to see more clearly how the work of the advisors relates to the daily operation of the school.

1. What adults, other than EDC advisors and aides, do you work with (fellow teachers, principal, local advisor, project director, supervisors, specialists, volunteers, others)?

   What do you do with each of these people?

2. When you have a problem you can't seem to solve on your own, who do you turn to?

3. Do you think you have enough influence over what happens in your classroom to be able to do what needs to be done?

   If not: Why not?

4. Do you think you have as much influence over your school and the Follow Through program as you would like to have?

   If no: Why not?
   Who does have influence?

VII. The last few questions have to do with difficulties and satisfactions you have felt as a Follow Through teacher.

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through teacher?

   Probe: Do you think that is different from non-Follow Through teaching?

2. What are the greatest difficulties you encounter as a Follow Through teacher?

   Probes: Do you think that is different from non-Follow Through teaching?
   What can you do about that?

3. If you were talking to another teacher who was considering entering the Follow Through program, what are some tips or ideas you would want to share?

AIDE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I. The first set of questions concerns your personal background:

1. How long have you been an aide in Follow Through?

   Probe: What grades have you worked with as a Follow Through aide?

2. How long have you been at the _____School?

3. How did you come to be a Follow Through aide at this school?

4. Would you briefly describe your work experience before you came to this job?

   Probes: How many years have you lived in (community)?
   Have you worked at a school before becoming a Follow Through aide?
   Was your previous work and other experience related to your current job?

5. What was your educational background before becoming a Follow Through aide?

6. Have you been continuing your education since becoming an aide in Follow Through?

II. Now I'd like to get an overview of your activities as an aide:

1. Could you give me an idea of how you work in the classroom by describing what you do during a typical day? I'm interested in knowing what you did on your own, what activities you shared with the teacher, and what was going on in the room. Starting with when you arrived, what did you do?

   Probes: What was the teacher doing then?
   What were the children you weren't working with doing?
   What do you do on your own?
   How was it decided that you would do those things?
   How do you handle disruptive behavior?
   Are you generally satisfied with your part in the classroom?

If yes: Go on.

If no: Why not?
What would you change?

2. Do you spend any time outside of class time doing things related to your job?

If yes: About how much time?
What do you do?

III. The next questions are about some of your views on children's learning. The first one is very broad:

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for children to be doing and learning in school in the early grades?

2. Which of the things which you feel children should be doing and learning are you most satisfied with in your classroom?

3. Which of those things would you most like to improve in your classroom?

4. We're interested in your view of parent involvement. Do you feel parents should be involved in their children's school?

If yes: In what ways?

If no: Why not?

IV. The next section is about your contact with EDC advisors and your opinions on their work. You may want to make some distinctions among different advisors if you have worked with more than one.

1. Have EDC advisors ever visited your classroom?

If yes: What do they usually do?
Do they work directly with you?
What do you do while they are in the room?
Have you found their work heopful? (Ask for examples)
Are there other things you would like to see advisors do in the classroom?

If no: Would you like advisors to work in your classroom?
What do you know about what they do in other classrooms?

2. I'd like to know about ways you have worked with EDC advisors outside of the classroom:

a. Have you ever attended a summer workshop in (community) with an advisor?

b. Have you attended any workshops during the year in with an advisor?

c. Have you ever gone to EDC in Boston for a workshop?

d. Have you had any individual conferences with an advisor?

e. Are there any other ways you have worked with an EDC advisor outside the classroom? What are they?

If yes to any of the above: Have you found working with advisors outside the classroom helpful to your work?

If no to all of the above: Would you like to work with advisors outside the classroom? What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with other aides outside the classroom?

3. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do? (with yourself and with others). How do they usually respond?

V. <u>The last few questions have to do with the difficulties and satisfactions you have felt as a Follow Through Aide</u>:

1. What are your greatest satisfactions as a Follow Through Aide?

2. What are the greatest difficulties you encounter as a Follow Through aide?

3. Have your experiences as an aide in Follow Through made any changes in your personal goals?

If so, what kinds of changes? Are you pleased with these changes?

4. If you could speak to another person who was considering entering the Follow Through program as an aide, what are some tips or ideas you would want to share?

5. When Follow Through leaves (<u>community</u>), how will that effect the program for children in your school?

Probes: What things will be missing?
What things will remain?

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I. The first set of questions concerns your personal background.

1. How long have you been a __(role)__ in Follow Through?

2. How did you come to be a __(role)__ in Follow Through?

3. How long have you been at the _____ school?

4. Would you briefly describe your work experience before you became a __(role)__ in Follow Through?

   Probes: How many years have you lived in (community)?
   Have you had any jobs outside of education?
   (for principals) How long have you been a principal?

5. What is your educational background?

   Probes: What degree or degrees do you hold?
   Are you working toward a degree now?
   Do you regularly take courses?

II. Now I'd like to get an overview of the activities related to your job. (for principals) This will enable us to see more clearly how the work of Follow Through relates to the daily operation of the school.

1. Would you describe the kinds of things you do as __(role)__.

2. Could you list the most important people and groups you work with and tell me what you usually do with them?
   (If parents and/or teachers not mentioned): Do you work directly with teachers/parents?

   If yes: What do you usually do with them?

   If no: Who does work with them?
   Do you support what they are doing with teachers/parents?
   How?

3. Of all the people you work with, which contribute the most to helping you carry out your job?

4. Overall, what have been your greatest satisfactions as a __(role)__ _____ in Follow Through?

5. What have been your greatest difficulties as a __(role)__ in Follow Through?

III. The next questions are about some of your views on children's learning.

1. In general, what kinds of things do you feel it is important for children to be doing and learning in school during the early grades?

2. Which of those things are happening to your satisfaction in your school?

3. Which of those things would you like to improve in your school?

4. Do you feel that parents should be involved in their children's school?

   If yes: In what ways?

   If no: Why not?

IV. The next section is about your contact with EDC advisors and your opinions on their work. You may want to make some distinctions among different advisors if you have worked with more than one.

1. What have EDC advisors done with you?
   In general, have you found your work with EDC advisors helpful?
   Why or why not?
   Can you give me some examples?
   What else would you like to see advisors doing with you?

2. What do you know about what EDC advisors have done with others in the program? (teachers, aides, parents, other administrators)
   Do you see these things as helpful in general? Why or why not?
   Can you give me some examples?

3. What difficulties have you had in working with EDC advisors?

4. How do you let advisors know about things you'd like to see them do? (with you or with others)

5. Do advisors generally do the kinds of things you'd like to see them do?
   Can you give me some examples?

6. Does EDC respond to your needs and wishes in assigning advisors? Can you give me some examples?

V. Now I'd like to ask some questions about EDC Follow Through as a whole.

1. First, I'd like to know what your understanding is of how EDC Follow Through came to (community). Do you know why EDC was chosen as a sponsor?
   How did the _____ schools become Follow Through schools?
   Were you involved in those decisions?
   Who were the key people involved?

2. In your opinion, what has the EDC Follow Through program tried to accomplish?
   Do you share those goals? Why or why not?
   Do you feel those goals are being accomplished? Why or why not?

3. What do you see as the most positive aspects of EDC Follow Through in (community)?

4. How about the other side? Are there also negative aspects to EDC Follow Through?
   What are they?

5. When EDC Follow Through leaves (community), how will that affect the program for children in your school?

   Probes: What will be missing?
   What will remain?

PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Introduction

My name is _____. I'm a parent at the _____ School. The questions I'm going to ask are about you and your children and your experiences with Follow Through. Your answers will be kept confidential, so I hope you will answer as openly as possible. Your responses are for a study involving parents, teachers, and others in (community) Follow Through Program. If you have any questions about Follow Through, I'll be glad to try to answer them at the end of the interview.

I. The first questions are about you and your children.

1. Responding parent's name _____.

2. What is your relationship to _____ (Follow Through child)?
   _____mother
   _____father
   _____other (specify)

3. Are you working at this time?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   _____full time
   _____part time

4. What was the last grade you completed in school?
   _____ eighth grade or less
   _____some high school
   _____high school equivalency
   _____completed high school
   _____some college
   _____completed college
   _____other (specify)

5. Now I would like you to tell me the names and ages of all the children in your care.
   (NOTE: If there are children over age 11 who were not in Follow Through, include supplementary questions at the end of the regular interview.)

NAME	AGE	HEADSTART
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

6. Have any of your children been in Head Start?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes, check above.)

II. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about Follow Through.

1. First, did you know that there is a program called Follow Through at the _____School?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   How did you hear about the Follow Through Program?
   _____from someone at school (specify)
   _____from another parent
   _____from the newsletter
   _____other (specify)

2. Do you know which of your children are now in the Follow Through Program?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes, list names.)
   (If no, tell names of children not in Follow Through.)

3. Have any of your other children been in the Follow Through Program?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes, list names)
   (NOTE: If there are older children who were not in Follow Through include supplementary questions at end.)

4. What do you think of the Follow Through Program? (Write on other side if needed).

   Probe: How is it different from the regular school program?

III. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about _____'s (Follow Through child) schooling.

1. What kinds of things do you feel it is important for _____ (Follow Through child) to be doing and learning at school? (List)

2. Of the things you have mentioned, which ones do you feel get enough attention at _____'s (Follow Through child) school?

3. Which things seem to be getting too little attention?

4. What are the things you like most about the _____ School? (including Follow Through)

5. What are the things you like least about the _____ School? (including Follow Through)

6. Can you tell me the ways you learn about how _____ (Follow Through child) is doing in school?
   _____talk with teacher
   _____talk with others at school (specify)
   _____talk with child
   _____watch child
   _____don't know
   _____other (specify)
   (If talk with teacher)
   a. Would you say you have talked with _____'s (Follow Through child) teacher:
      _____once
      _____a few times
      _____often

   b. Does the teacher ask for a meeting or do you ask to talk with the teacher?
      _____teacher asks
      _____parent asks
      _____both

7. Are you pleased with _____'s (Follow Through child) progress in school?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If no)
   What do you feel you can do to change things? (List)

8. Does _____(Follow Through child) talk about school at home?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   What does he/she talk about?

9. Do you feel _____(Follow Through child) likes school? (Please explain).
   _____yes
   _____no

10. Do you think there are any specific ways in which the Follow Through Program has influenced _____'s (Follow Through child) learning and development?
    _____yes
    _____no
    (If yes)
    How?

IV. Now I would like to ask about contacts you have had with _____'s (Follow Through school.

1. Have you ever visited _____'s (Follow Through child) school?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   Have you visited once, a few times, or often?
   _____once
   _____a few times
   _____often

2. Have you ever helped as a volunteer at school?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If no)
   Would you like to volunteer at school?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   What would help you to do this?
   (Probe for things like child care, being asked by teacher)
   (If yes - you helped as a volunteer)
   a. How often would you say you have helped, once, a few times, or often?
      _____once
      _____a few times
      _____often
   b. Did the teacher, or someone else, ask for your help, or did you offer your help?
      _____parent offered
      _____someone asked (specify)
   c. What did you do as a volunteer?
      (List)
   d. Was volunteering at school a good experience for you?
      _____yes
      _____no
      Please explain.
   e. Do you plan to do this kind of thing again?
      _____yes
      _____no
      Could you explain why (or why not)?

V. Now I'd like to ask you some questions about Parent Activities at the _____ School.

1. Have you ever attended a meeting of the PTO?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   Have you attended once, a few times, or often?
   _____once
   _____a few times
   _____often

2. Have you ever attended a meeting of the PAC (Policy Advisory Committee)?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   a. Have you attended once, a few times or often?
      _____once
      _____a few times
      _____often
   b. Have you ever taken part in an activity or talked with an EDC Follow Through advisor?
      _____yes
      _____no
   c. Do you know what EDC advisors do?
      _____yes
      _____no

3. a. (For those who <u>have</u> attended parent meetings)
      What are some of the reasons you go to parent meetings?
      (List)
   b. (For those who have <u>not</u> attended parent meetings)
      Did you know that there are parent meetings?
      _____yes
      _____no
      Would you like to attend parent meetings?
      _____yes
      _____no

4. Have you participated in any Follow Through parent activities (other than meetings) such as, the garden project, parent workshops, and suppers?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   Which ones?
   (List)
   (If no)
   Would you like to participate in other activities?
   _____yes
   _____no

5. How do you hear about parent activities?
   _____haven't heard
   _____notices
   _____telephone calls
   _____newsletter
   _____talking with other parents
   _____other (specify)

6. How is it best to notify you about activities for parents?

7. Do you have any difficulties in arranging to come to parent activities?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   (List, for example, child care, transportation, time when activities take place.

8. Are there activities which you would like to see available for parents that have not been mentioned?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   a. Can you tell me your suggestions?
   b. Would you be willing to help make these activities possible?
      _____yes
      _____no

VI. This last group of questions is about how you view your role in your child's school experience.

1. Do you feel that your involvement can help your child's education?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   How?
   (List)
   (If no, please explain)

2. Do you see any benefits for you, personally, in being active in the school?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   What are they?
   (List)

3. Do you think you might be more active:
   _____yes _____no If you know more about school activities?
   _____yes _____no If child care were provided?
   _____yes _____no If other kinds of activities were possible?

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS:

(For parents who have older children in the school who have not been in the Follow Through Program.)

Since you have some children who were not in the Follow Through Program during the early grades, I'd like to ask you a few additional questions.

1. Do you think there are any differences between _____'s (Follow Through child) school experience and that of your older child/children who was/were not in Follow Through?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   Can you tell me two or three ways in which _____'s (Follow Through child) school experience is different? For each difference, ask, "Do you approve of that?" (Approve) and check at left.)

yes	no	
_____	_____	1.
_____	_____	2.
_____	_____	3.

2. Compared to when your older child/children was/were in the early grades have you had more, less, or about the same amount of contact with people at school since _____(Follow Through child) has been in school?
   _____more
   _____less
   _____about the same

3. Have you participated in more, less, or about the same number of parent activities since your child has been in Follow Through than with your older child/children?
   _____more
   _____less
   _____about the same

4. Do you think there are any specific ways in which the Follow Through Program has influenced your involvement with the school?
   _____yes
   _____no
   (If yes)
   Can you give some examples?
   (List)